



MILITARY MINIATURES in REVIEW

The AFV Club Churchill III arrives!

no. 48

Mighty Grasshopper

Mike Rinaldi grapples with Dragon's Heuschrecke IVb

MMiR: just add water and shake

\$9.95

CANADA \$15.95

04 >



SHORT TAKES • MINI-MEN • MMiR PAINTING GUIDE

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Mighty Grasshopper 26

Mike Rinaldi grapples with Dragon's Heuschrecke IVb 10.5cm le.F.H. 18/6(Sf.) auf Geschützswagen III/IV.

The New U.S. Army Workhorse 45

Photo reference for Trumpeter's all new FMTV kit.

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The long-awaited AFV Club Churchill Mk III arrives.

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We build the long-awaited plastic kit of the Allies' iconic workhorse with some help from Masters Productions in the form of resin wheels and top.

ON THE COVER:

Mike Rinaldi demonstrates some more of his cool painting and weathering techniques. This time it's a three-tone scheme on Dragon's steroid-enhanced Panzer IV, the mighty "Grasshopper." Turn to page 26 for the full story.



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Things are buzzing right along here at Ampersand Towers. We have received quite a lot of positive feedback regarding our changes to the Short Takes section.

From Your Editor

We appreciate this, as we don't often get feedback of the positive kind! These changes were especially helpful this time around, due to an unusually heavy Short Takes section. I guess the military modeling industry hasn't heard about the global economic crisis. Whatever the reason, we are seeing more and more new and fantastic products, only a

few of which are reviewed in the following pages.

Another aspect of the Short takes section that you may not be aware of is that we are attempting to sample and test as many of the items as possible, in order to give you a fuller idea of what's in store for you should you purchase any one of them.

In the next issue we will be returning to our "review roots" with a three-way, out of the box (ish) review of the latest artillery pieces from Trumpeter and Dragon. Jeff, Pat and I take cracks at the M2A1 105mm Howitzer, Soviet 203mm Howitzer and the modern U.S. M198 155mm Field Gun.

Don't be too alarmed about us featuring a Sci-Fi tank in this issue. When we first received it in for review, we all in unison said, "Wow, how cool is that thing?" Before Pat and I had a chance to root through the box, Jeff had scampered off and hid under his desk clutching it close to his chest as he made growling noises. When he finally emerged a couple of weeks later he was grinning like a new Dad proudly showing off his latest creation. Not only is it a great looking vehicle, but it also has really clever tooling and was great fun to paint. It was essentially a blank canvas for experimentation with camouflage colors and weathering techniques, all of which are just as relevant to a futuristic fictional tank as they are to a historical model.

With so many distractions for kids these days, these sci-fi kits may well be the way to lure some young blood into the hobby. At this year's AMPS show, and at the shows I attend back home in the UK, the average age of the people attending, displaying or entering the competitions is the wrong side of 40! Lets just hope with the amount of sci-fi films, computer games and Manga comic books available to youngsters these days will inspire them to build a model of their favorite machine (Gundam) or character. After all, laboratory tests have consistently proved that we older modelers built kits when we were much younger, stopped for a while and returned to the hobby after we had gotten our fill of college, women and beer! (Someone please tell Pat!)

Purely coincidentally, Mig Productions has recently announced a range of fantasy "Walking Tanks" which feature turrets from real tanks but with giant mechanical legs! Maybe that's just the enticement the kids will need?

Congratulations, it's a website

In other news, Ampersand's website is now up and running at www.ampersandpubco.com. We hope you'll stop by to learn a little more about the company and our staff, preview upcoming issues of MMiR and our other publications and fill any gaps in your collection. All back issues still in stock are available for sale. Not sure if you're ready to take the plunge? Fear not—complete tables of contents are provided so you know exactly what you're getting. Your feedback on the site is also most welcome. Just shoot me an email at mmir.john@googlemail.com and let me know what it is you'd like to see more—or less—of.

—Spud Murphy

Coming soon to an MMiR near you:



Editor

JOHN "SPUD" MURPHY

Publisher

PAT STANSELL

Editorial Contributors

JEFF KLEINHENZ

RICK LAWLER

MIKE RINALDI

KEYSER SOZE

Mini-Men

JEFF KLEINHENZ

Infectious Disease Coordinator

SARAH WOOD

Advertising Sales

EMAIL: MMIRPAT@AOL.COM

Subscription Manager

JEFF KLEINHENZ

EMAIL: JEFF@AMPERSANDPUBCO.COM

Some of the Photography

PAT STANSELL

Some of the other Photography

JOHN MURPHY

RICK LAWLER

MIKE RINALDI

Pre-building and Shelf Emptier

BRIAN KEOUGH

Conflict Resolution Specialist

YVONNE APEESAMEY

Director of Staff Pay Increases

XAVIER BREATH

(ASSISTED BY TONY VON THINKETT!)

180 Days and Hanging

TONY BONTATIBUS

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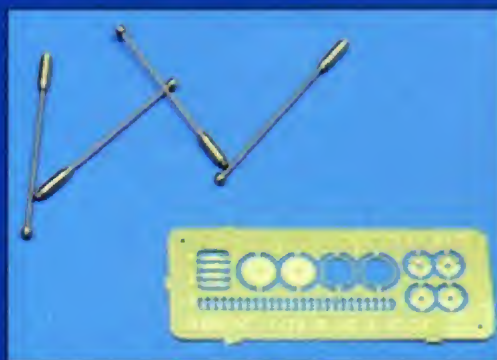
Short Takes

what's new, anyway?

Aber

There is only one new item in from Aber at press time: 35R29, German Width Indicators SdKfz 231, 232 (4), \$9.99. This is a beautiful detail set of width indicators designed for the 231 and 232 "8 rads," and once you try it you'll wonder how you ever survived without it!

Get your brass on at <http://aber.net.pl/> or www.airconnection.on.ca



Adalbertus

Since our last issue it looks like Adalbertus has had a very productive period, with a varied selection of new releases: 35011, WW2 German paratrooper medic - Fallschirmjäger Sanitäter Monte Cassino 1944, \$14.41; 35012, WW2 German paratrooper (wounded), \$14.41 and 35013, WW2 German paratroopers Fallschirmjäger wounded and medic diorama (Includes Resin Base), \$28.83.

Adalbertus also handles the ToRo 1:35 scale line, which has added these delicacies to its menu: 35018, Studebaker US6 Wheels & brake drums for ICM kit, \$14.41; 35A02, Barricade Resin base, \$10.48; 35A03, Ruined Pharmacy/Cobbler Vignette, \$26.21; 35F21, Infantry Officer with Nagant, Lenino 1943, \$14.41; 35F22, Civilian refugee with three different heads, \$22.28; 35F24, Leopard Tank Crew, \$27.52; 35F26, Berlin Ruins 1945 with 2 figs, \$47.17 and 35F27, Barricade vignette Warsaw 1944, \$23.59.

Unfortunately we don't have any photos to accompany the lists, but rest assured that both the Adalbertus and ToRo lines are well sculpted and superbly cast.

Accurate Armour

As if all those awesome Antar kits weren't enough for one manufacturer to be producing at any one time, the guys at AA have been busy with yet more unusual subjects. The first, C091, Chieftain MARKSMAN (Full Conversion & update), \$60.87, is the very cool looking Marksman anti-aircraft turret as seen fitted to a UK Chieftain MBT for trial and evaluation. The Marksman is fitted with twin 35mm Oerlikon KDA cannons, which are designed to fire at a rate of 550 rounds per minute. The conversion comes complete with a full resin turret with elevating guns and positionable radar, sights and hatches. Smaller details are featured on a photo-etch fret. What's especially nice about this set is that AA also includes a complete upper hull for the Tamiya Chieftain kit, including all the associated fixtures and fittings as well as a full set of side skirts. You have to admit this is one cool looking vehicle and will certainly be a talking point in any 1:35 collection. This is also available as a conversion

only, minus the Chieftain upper hull and fittings (set C092).

And now for something completely different, LR011, Hotspur Armoured Land Rover, \$51.05.



This Land Rover was developed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary for internal security duties during the 1970's. The name Hotspur comes from the brand of armor concealed within the vehicle to protect the crew. These vehicles were eventually withdrawn from active duty in 1991 after 15 years of service during which they were prominently featured in many news reports that covered this troubled period of Northern Ireland's history. The kit, designed and mastered by Rob Tearle, is the later version with the 3.5-liter V8 engine. It features full chassis, internal detail, a comprehensive photo-etch set, colored glass casting and tinted armored glass. A comprehensive decal sheet is also included for both RUC vehicles and the ones used by ITN news to cover the civil war in Yugoslavia during the early 90's.

For up-to-the-minute information, see www.accurate-armour.com



It's also great to see the release of a couple of useful items in 1:48 scale, perfect for keeping you quarter scale fans happy. Here's the new stuff in this scale: 48F52, Sophie with Horse Drawn Cart, \$28.83 and 48011, M4 Sherman M3 type bogies, \$14.41. Check out the Adalbertus website to see

their great range of interesting and unusual products at www.adalbertus.com.pl

Adlers Nest

How did we cope before turned brass and aluminum barrels came along? And as if these barrels

AFV Club

The guys from Taiwan have been releasing some great subjects lately. The list has terrific variety: 35S51, T-34/76 1942 Special Edition turret and upper hull in clear parts, \$58.00; 35148, 15cm sIG 33 Infantry Gun, TBA; 35160, M2A1 105mm Howitzer, TBA; 35175, M1A1 75mm Pack Howitzer, TBA; 35180, M8 Howitzer Motor Carriage, TBA; 35183, B.T.S. 3 Heavy Built-up tracks for Churchill Tank (Workable), TBA and AG35022, 57mm OQF 6 pdr Mk V L/50 Barrel, for Crusader Mk III, Cromwell Mk I, Churchill Mk III, Churchill Mk IV, TBA.

The T-34/76 special edition with clear parts is certainly a surprise—even though we're not sure if many people will make full use of the clear turret and hull when building this stunningly detailed kit! The M8 HMC is a kit that has been screaming out to be redone with modern tooling, since the venerable old Tamiya kit is long overdue for retirement.

And what is it with these Far Eastern manufacturers



all releasing identical products at virtually the same time? Well, the latest in this race is the M2A1 105mm Howitzer, and with AFV Club's reputation for producing highly detailed artillery

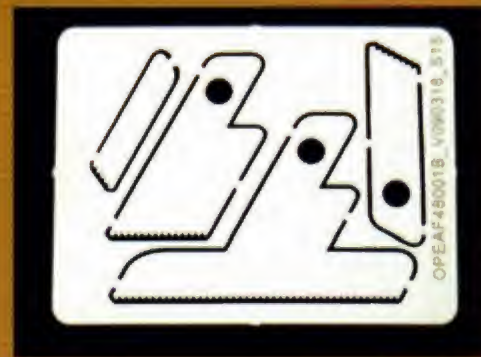


kits, we think we might have a winner.

In 1:48 scale, look for 48008, German SdKfz 251/1 Ausf. D Halftrack, TBA.

Also enjoy these photos of a few of the previously announced items such as the 1:48 Sturm Tiger, 1:35th scale Sturm Tiger ammo and 57mm ammo.

AFV's U.S. importer Merit International cordially invites you to their website: www.merit-intl.com



38cm RW6-1 L/5.4 ASSAULT ROCKET FOR STURMTIGER



weren't enough on their own, the likes of Adlers Nest now even produce them in a steel blue finish so you don't even have to paint the darned things! Check out the list: ANM-35029, 2cm Flak 38 Barrel without Flash Hider, ¥800; ANM-35029B, 2cm Flak 38 Barrel without Flash Hider SBF (Steel Blue Finish), ¥1000; ANM-35030, Flak 37 3.7cm Barrel, TBA and ANM-35030B, Flak 37 3.7cm Barrel (SBF), TBA.

Their Japanese language only website, www.adlersnest.com, has cool illustrations. Order information can be found at www.hlj.com. For super-accurate barrels, these are definitely your guys.

Alarmi!

Alarmi! has been quietly producing a very nice range of figures and accessories, and these latest items are all worthy additions: 35043, Tribute to El Alamein - Folgore Paratrooper 1942, €14.00; 35044, Tribute to El Alamein - British Infantry 1942, €14.00; 35045, Rifles Lee Enfield Mk III, €3.30; 35046, Equipaggio L6/40 in winter dress, €26.50 and 35047, Equipaggio M13/40 in summer dress, TBA.

The tank crew figures are particularly welcome and are perfect for filling the hatches in Tamiya's recently re-released M13/40 and Italeri's L6/40.

Alarmi! is on the web www.italiankits.it/allarmi.html

Artisan Mori

The list from Artisan Mori is short, but not disappointing. MGP24, Panther early cast exhausts, ¥1000, is a beautifully cast and superbly detailed set.



Alpine

Alpine is celebrating its 5th anniversary this year. Has it really only been five years? It seems like a lifetime—or maybe it's just that we've repressed all our memories of those cold, bitter, pre-Alpine days. To celebrate, they are releasing S0001, "The Battle of Kharkov," TBA. Only 200 of this four-figure, limited edition set are being produced, however, so act fast. Each box is individually numbered, autographed and stamped, so if you can keep yourself from tearing it open as soon as you get your hands on it, you may want to put it in a safe and will it to your children.

The rest of the new releases aren't too shabby, either: 35081, German Infantry Officer, \$16.50; 35082, German Infantry NCO, \$16.50; 35083, German Infantry set - 2 figures, \$32.00; 35084, German Heer Panzer Crew #1, \$16.50; 35085, German Heer Panzer Crew #2, \$16.50 and 35086, German Heer Panzer Crew Set, \$32.00. In 1:16 scale, we have 16066, WSS Panzer Crew "LSSAH," \$50.00.

See it all for yourself at www.alpineminiatures.com

It features tiny casting marks and an ultra-thin exhaust outlet wall, and is aimed at anyone who wants to add the very best in detail to their latest Panther project. And really, who doesn't?

Visit Artisan Mori online at <http://www3.ocn.ne.jp/~m.a.mori/>

ATAK

If a kit doesn't come with its own zimmerit, like some of the Dragon's latest releases, then ATAK is the way to go. Check out these new items: 35045, Zimmerit PzKpfw IVH Late Production (Dragon),

\$36.99; 35046, Zimmerit Tiger I Mid Production (model 2) (Tamiya), TBA and 35047 PzKpfw IV H Late Production (model 2) (Dragon), TBA.

ATAK zimmerit is made from ultra-thin, flexible resin. The set for the Tamiya Tiger I even features the different hull and turret patterns most often seen on these vehicles. The Panzer IV H set has to be seen to be believed, featuring some 62 separate zimmerit sections—it even includes two new driver's plates with different patterns. This sure beats the heck out of doing it with modeling putty!

Archer

It wasn't so long ago that we either had to hand paint markings on ammo boxes that all too often didn't hold up to close inspection, or make do with some non-descript aircraft stencils. But now thanks to Archer, we have truly authentic markings, specific to individual ammunition types. This also goes for items such as fire extinguishers and a whole host of instrument panel stencils and bezels. We now have no excuse for not including those oh-so-important little details that truly bring a model to life.

Archer is adding the following to their already impressive line-up: 16014, German WWII fire extinguisher placards, \$9.95; 16015, King Tiger instruments and Surface Detail bezels (Trumpeter), \$6.95; 16016, King Tiger interior stencils (Trumpeter), \$6.95; 35292, Krupp Protze



(88mm, black), \$6.95; 35301W, German ammo box stencils (88mm, white), \$6.95; 35302B, German ammo box stencils (75mm long and short, black), \$6.95; 35302W, German ammo box stencils (75mm long and short, white), \$6.95; 35303B, German ammo box stencils (100mm, 105mm, 150mm, black), \$6.95; 35303W, German ammo box stencils (100mm, 105mm, 150mm, white), \$6.95; 35304B, German ammo box stencils (Nebelwerfer, Wurframen, black), \$6.95 and 35304W, German ammo box stencils (Nebelwerfer, Wurframen, white), \$6.95.

And, no, that's not all—but we bet you already knew that. Archer also has these new surface detail sets for your modeling pleasure: 88024, N-scale rivets, \$14.95; 88025, HO-scale rivets (7/8 inch), \$14.95; 88026, HO-scale rivets (5/8 inch), \$14.95 and 88027, 1:16 scale Surface Detail tread plate and casting marks for Trumpeter King Tiger, TBA.

See all this and more at www.archertransfers.com

Werkzeugkasten 1	Werkzeugkasten 2	Werkzeugkasten 3	Oben
1. Hammer	1. Hammer	1. Hammer	M.P. M.P.
2. Meißel	2. Meißel	2. Meißel	Ein 1
3. Schraubenzieher	3. Schraubenzieher	3. Schraubenzieher	Aus 4
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instruments and placards, \$6.95; 35295, SdKfz 7 Instruments And Placards, \$7.95; 35296, SdKfz 11.4 Instruments and Placards, \$7.95; 35297, SdKfz 9 FAMO Instruments and Placards, \$7.95; 35298, Opel Blitz Instruments and placards, \$4.95; 35299, Horch Command Car Instruments and placards, \$4.95; 35300B, German ammo box stencils (Rifle, 20mm 37mm, 50mm, black), \$6.95; 35300W, German ammo box stencils (Rifle, 20mm 37mm, 50mm, white), \$6.95; 35301B, German ammo box stencils

ATAK's website is www.atakmodel.com.pl, and Air Connection, their American distributor, is at www.airconnection.on.ca

Azimut

Our Parisian friends have made a name for themselves releasing great resin detail sets and conversions, and I'm sure these latest ones will be well received: 35111, V100/150 Hull Interior Set (Bronco), €20.82 and 35108, Peugeot P4P w/ armor kit (Revell Wolf), €33.36. Azimut also handles Best Value Models, which is offering these new items: 35065, Mercedes 4500 Flakwagen w/ 2cm Flakvierling, €45.90; 35067, Humber Mk I Indochina French service (Bronco), €41.72 and 35066, USAF XM-706E2 Armored Car (Hobby Boss), €37.63.

We're particularly excited about that last item. The Hobby Boss kit of the V100 isn't bad, but it is lacking in some areas, notably the inaccurate and sparse interior. But thanks to these guys we will now have all the missing parts to really show off this model to its best. For the complete Azimut range, check out www.azimutproductions.com

Bastion 35

If you have an Eastern Front diorama planned, then check out Bastion 35's range of buildings, structures and bridges made from laser-cut wood and wooden dowel. New this time we have: 3515, Russ-

Atelier Infinite

With the 1:35 scale "Paper Panzer" kits coming out our ears, it's nice to see Atelier Infinite take the bear by its claws and release some "sketchbook" Stalin's Giants to do battle with them: 35-0063, KV-3 and 35-0064, KV-5.



On initial inspection, these full resin kits look like believable and well-engineered models,

Aurora Model

Fancy populating your latest diorama with some female figures? Then you need to check out Aurora Models. They not only offer some interesting WW2 figures, but some modern subjects too. All are cast in white metal and are beautifully proportioned. The challenge will be to think of ways to include some of the more unusually posed ladies into a scene!

Here they are, boys: ML-025, German Air Signals Auxiliaries ver. 1, Y2000; ML-026, German Air Signals Auxiliaries ver. 2, Y2000; ML-027, German Shepherd with Medical Pack, Y800; ML-028, German Red Cross Nurse ver. 2, Y2000; ML-029, German Red Cross Nurse ver. 3, Y2000 and ML-030, German Anti-Aircraft Auxiliaries ver. 2, Y2000. Don't get fresh—they may be small, but those little fists really hurt! Go to <http://aurora-model.jp/e-military.html> to feast your eyes.



ian dwelling, €16.50; 3516, Vendor kiosk, €8.50; 3517, Concrete armoured hood, €11.90; 3518, German all round MG position "Wooden Tobruk," €16.50; 3519, German three gun-port timber-earth MG caponier, €19.90; 3520, Flanking reinforced timber-earth machine gun half-shelter, €16.50; 3521, Light timber-earth machine gun shelter, €13.30; 3522, Windmill No. 1, €29.90; 3523, Log Bridge, TBA and 3524, King Post Bridge, TBA.

They look great on their website, www.bastion35.ru, but it's only fair to warn you that these items might not be for the inexperienced modeler.



featuring individual-link working tracks, articulating suspensions and fine surface detail throughout. For more info, visit <http://www.jtkk.zaq.ne.jp/a-if/index.htm>. To go shopping, head to www.hlj.com

Battalion Models

We frequently feature these guys in Mini-Men and overall they have been well received by our resident figure expert Jeff. Some clean-up is needed during construction, but that small drawback is totally outweighed by the subject matter. Who else produces so many modern Russian figures that are so animated and in such great poses?

The newest additions to the line are 35013A, Russian crew AIFV; 35013B, Russian crew AIFV; 35013C, Russian crew AIFV; 35013D, Modern Russian soldiers; 35014, Russian special forces to the radio; 35015, "1941;" 35017, Soviet border with a dog and 35018, Soviet tank crew.



Meet these little guys in person at www.armor35.ru

The Body

Need a dejected looking SS Trooper wearing a zeltbahn having a smoke break? Who doesn't! We also have two sets of heads, the first being Germans wearing winter head gear and the second four G.I.s wearing helmets and one wearing the familiar woolen knit cap. Though not quite up to Hornet standards (well, we can't all be demigods), they are still very nice. Both sets contain five heads. And here they are: 35001, Waffen SS (sitting), \$15.75; 35005, German winter head set, \$13.50 and 35006, U.S. G.I. head set, \$13.50.

Browse The Body's lineup at <http://www.thebody.eu>, and go shopping at Colorado Miniatures (www.coloradominiatures.com) or Military Miniatures Warehouse (www.milminwh.com).

CMK Kits

CMK has something for everyone. Not only do they produce stunning engine compartment sets and interior detailing sets, but they also have some great accessories in both 1:35 and 1:72 scale. If you ever want to really go to town on a project, take five minutes to scan these CMK lists.

The 1:35 scale detail sets are: 3109, New Maybach HL 120 TRM German tank engine, \$20.00; 3110, Maybach HL 230 P30, \$20.00; 3111, V-55A - Soviet Tank Engine USSR, post-war, \$20.00; 3112, Praga TNHPS Tank Engine WWII, Czechoslovakia, Germany, \$20.00; B35032, Soviet smoke dischargers 902B TUCA, 81mm (8 pcs), \$5.30; B35033, WWII U.S. fuel can (6 pcs), \$5.30; B35034, WWII German fuel can (6 pcs), \$5.30; B35035, WWII German oil can (10 pcs), \$5.30; B35036, German WWII Night Light Nova Technik "NOTEK" (5 pcs), \$5.30; B35037, German WWII distance rear lights "Abstandsrücklicht NOTEK," \$5.30 and B35038, German WWII hand pump and barrel, \$5.30.

They are also releasing some 1:35 scale full resin kits: RA043, SdAnh 105 (German Field Bakery), \$63.00; RA044, DKW F91/6 Munga (NATO Staff Car), \$56.00 and 3110, Maybach HL 230 P30 WWII German tank engine, \$20.00.

In 1:72 scale, there are these detail sets: B72039, German WWII sacks (10 pcs), \$5.30; 2038, DUKW Engine set (Italeri), \$14.80 and 2039, DUKW Detail set (Italeri), \$14.80.

Take some time to visit www.cmkkits.com. You won't be disappointed.

Dioramas Plus

If you need a highly detailed plaster cast building for the center piece or backdrop for your latest

diorama, look no further than Dioramas Plus. They offer some stunning buildings, both ruined, and, like DP15, French Bakery \$49.95, undamaged (it's hard to believe, but not every building in occupied Europe was damaged during World War Two!). There

is also DP12, Three-story Apartment, \$44.95, which should prove very popular for those of you who are into modern themes. It's perfect for scenes from Baghdad to Beirut. Lastly, there is DP14, Last Stand, \$24.95.

Go to www.dioramasplus.com right this minute!

Dnepromodel

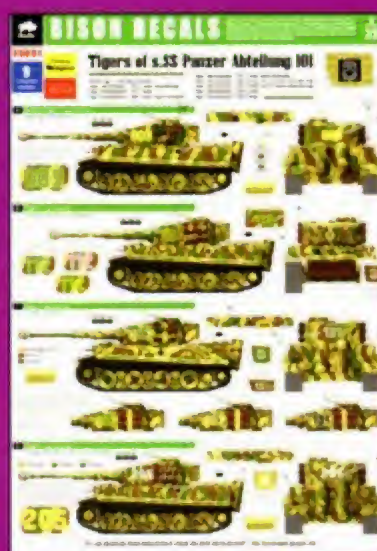
Dnepromodel from the Ukraine is new to us this issue. The company specializes in 1:35 and 1:15 scale short run synthetic resin models. On initial inspection, quality looks good and although the production run might be short, the bloody list isn't! Make some coffee, take a seat, get comfortable and start reading—and don't forget to take regular breaks!

Okay, here we go: 3501, Opel Blitz 1t. PaK 37mm limber, TBA; 3502, Opel Blitz 1t. Platform, €74.95; 3503, RF-8GAZ-98, TBA; 3504, Entwicklungs E-39, TBA; 3505, MG 42 & metal barrel, TBA; 3506, German radio & telex set, €24.50; 3507, SdKfz 9 FAMO Engine, TBA; 3508, German leIG 18 75mm gun, €44.95; 3509, German 3t. Crane, TBA; 3510, VW Kübelwagen engine, TBA; 3511, Soviet 76mm M41 regimental gun, TBA; 3512, Opel Blitz Engine and transmission, €24.95; 3513, King Tiger transmission box, TBA; 3514, AT-3 Maljutka, €14.50; 3515, German canister, €32.95; 3516, German 75mm ammo, €24.95; 3517, German 50mm ammo & ammo box, €28.50; 3518,

Bison Decals

Holy dog-doo, Batman! Bison's latest listing of superb water-slide decals is one seriously mixed bag. They cover everything from armor in Afghanistan to pre-war Chinese Panzer Is to Staghounds, Greyhounds and various tanks in Cuban service. In addition to these rather eclectic releases, we have some great sets for British, French and Kiwi Shermans. And lest we forget the oft-neglected Germans, there is also a colorful set for mid and late production Tigers Is of schwere Abteilung 101 during the Normandy campaign.

And now for the nitty-gritty: 35089, British Shermans in Italy: Sherman Mk IIB and Mk III, \$14.99; 35090, Royal Artillery (RA) in Italy: M10, M10 Achilles, M7 Priest, M3 Halftrack, Sherman Command Tank, \$14.99; 35091, Tigers of sSSPzAbt 101, \$14.99; 35092, Dingo Scout Car, \$14.99; 35093, Axis Allies #1 - Russian RONA and ROA (POHA/POA) \$14.99; 35094, French 2eme DB Shermans (1): M4A2, TBA; 35095, French 2eme DB Shermans (2): M4A1, M4 (105), M4A3 (76)W, TBA; 35096, 20th NZ Armoured Regiment in Italy: Sherman Mk III, Firefly Mk VC, M3A1 White Scout, TBA; 35097, Chinese



Tank Markings 1930-40's: PzKpfw IA, T-26 m/1933, Vickers 6-ton, Vickers Amphibious Tank, TBA; 35098, Cuban Tank Markings: M8 Grayhound, T17E1 Staghound, M4A3 (76) Sherman, A34 Comet, T-54B, T-55A, T-62A, TBA; 35099, Caucasus on Fire (1): BMP-1, BMP-2D and BTR-80 in Chechnya, TBA; 35100, Afghan Tanks (2): T-62, BMP-1 and BMP-2, TBA; 72011, Tigers of sSSPzAbt 101, TBA; 72014, Iwo Jima: 13 specific Shermans and generic Amtrac numbers, TBA; 72020, British Tanks in Italy: 11 Sherman Mk III, Mk IIID and Mk IIB, TBA; 72021, British Sherman Firefly: Firefly Mk IC, Mk IC Hybrid and Mk VC, TBA and 72022, French 2eme DB Shermans: M4A1, M4A2, M4 105mm, M4A3(76)W, TBA.

Bison's home page is www.angelfire.com/pro/bison, but they no longer sell direct. Their official U.S. distributor is Tankrats AFV Depot, online at www.tankratsafvdepot.com

Black Dog

Black Dog leads the way in stowage accessory sets for the ever expanding range of 1:48 armor. The latest to get the Black Dog treatment is Tamiya's lovely little Deuce and a Half, which



looks so cool converted into the SAS version used in Northwest Europe '44. Our favorite new release, though, is the IDF Uparmored Humvee. This is one cool looking vehicle—now we just need a 1:48 Merkava IV to go with it!

Black Dog's new releases are: 48048, US 2 1/2-ton Cargo Truck accessories set, \$15.00; 48049, US 2 1/2-ton Cargo Truck Traction devices, \$20.00; 48050, US 2 1/2-ton Cargo Truck cargo bay canvas, \$22.60; 48051,

US 2 1/2-ton Cargo Truck open cargo bay canvas, \$24.00; 48052, US 2 1/2-ton Cargo Truck big accessory set, \$50.00; 48053, Steyr Type 1500A/01 accessories set, TBA; 48054, British SAS Jeep Europe 1944, TBA; 48055, SdKfz 251/1 Ausf. C accessories set, TBA; 48056, British SAS Jeep crew Africa (2 figures), TBA; 48057, Steyr Type 1500A/01 snow chained wheels set, TBA and 48058, IDF Uparmored Humvee conversion set, TBA.



The company is online at www.blackdog.cz. Items can be ordered at www.track48.com

Blast Models

Blast seems to have a knack for turning a vehicle that initially might not seem so appetizing into one that's just begging to be built. In this issue we have some more really meaty upgrades for the French Army's VAB armored car, which is currently on active duty in Afghanistan. Check it out: 35141K, Conversion VAB Top Remote Weapon Station - Afghanistan, €15.05; 35142K, VAB Anti IED System AVG600 - Afghanistan,

€10.03; 35143K, VAB Stowage and Accessories - Afghanistan, €14.63; 35144K, VAB Rear Ballistic Protection W Cal .50 - Afghanistan, €12.96; 35145K, 6 FAMAS with Tactical Accessories - Afghanistan, €8.28; 35146K, M151A2 Remote Weapons Station, €11.62 and 35147K, Panhard P4P protected (Revell), €25.00. Do you like them apples?

Go to the Blast Models website, www.blast-models.com, to get your modeling juices flowing.



88mm Flak 36 ammo & ammo box, €35.80; 3519, R-107 Soviet radio, €12.50; 3520, 88mm Tiger I ammo & ammo container, €38.50; 3521, German accessories set 1, €42.95; 3522, German 50mm KwK L/42 fortifications gun, TBA; 3523, 88mm King Tiger ammo, €27.95; 3524, T-34 engine & transmission box, TBA; 3525, Nebelwerfer 41 ammo & ammo container, €23.95; 3526, German 80mm mortar, TBA; 3527, German 80mm mortar & mortar box, TBA; 3528, Bofors 40mm AA gun

Hungarian & German version, TBA; 3529, Bofors 40mm ammo & ammo box, TBA; 3530, Soviet 76mm artillery ammo & ammo box, €34.95; 3531, Pz III & Pz IV Track, TBA; 3532, T-40, ASU-76, T-60, T-70, T-80, SU-76 track, TBA; 3533, 20mm Flak magazine & magazine box, TBA; 3534, German tanks jack, €17.95; 3535, German bike, TBA; 3536, German trucks jack, TBA; 3537, Pz III Engine, TBA; 3538, Tiger II Engine, TBA; 3539, Panther Engine, TBA; 3540, German accessories set

Bravo 6

In keeping with their Vietnam theme, Bravo 6 is extending their range of characters from the movie "Platoon": 35006, U.S. Infantry Private (3) Vietnam '68, \$17.99 and 35007, U.S. Infantry Officer & RTO Vietnam '68, \$39.99. In addition, they are now adding three much-needed Vietcong "Irregulars," all of whom are



depicted in action poses and really look the part. They are 35013, Vietcong Fighter-1 Local Forces, \$17.99; 35014, Vietcong Fighter-2 Local Forces, \$17.99 and 35015, Vietcong Fighter-3 Local Forces, \$17.99.

The last figure, 35018, Australian SAS "Best Wishes" Vietnam '68, isn't something you see to often. This guy is an Australian troop in Vietnam—and he's giving the universal middle finger gesture!

Bravo6's homepage is <http://bravo6.diorama.ru/>. Their products are available in the U.S. from Military Miniatures Warehouse (www.milminwh.com).

2, €25.95; 3541, Soviet GAZ M1 Engine, TBA; 3542, Soviet DT-29 Tank machine gun, €7.95 and 3543, Opel Blitz 1t. Early version, TBA.

And in 1:15 scale, 1501, Toldi I Hungarian light tank, TBA; 1502, Toldi II Hungarian light tank, TBA; 1503, Toldi I Sanitar Hungarian light tank, TBA; 1504, Toldi III Hungarian light tank, TBA and 1505, Bofors 40mm AA gun Hungarian & German version, TBA.

Whew! After you catch your breath, head over to <http://www.ostmodell.com/shop/index.php>

Echelon

When you are hunting down decals for that truly unique finish, don't pass these guys up. Echelon continues to release a lot of nice decal sets, especially for modern armor fans. You'll notice some WW2 sets thrown in this list too for good measure: D356041, Australian M1A1 AIM Abrams, \$12.50; D356057, Australian UN M113A1 APCs in Rwanda, \$9.50; D356063, 720th MP Btn V100 Commando in Vietnam (pt. 3), \$9.50; D356064, Marder II (SdKfz 131) on the Eastern Front, \$6.00; D356065, Danish Black Recce Leopard 1 A5DKs, \$7.50; D356067, Homeless Space Intruders for Adoption, \$6.50; D356068, 720th MP Btn V100 Commando in Vietnam (pt. 4), \$9.50; D356080, Spanish VRC-105 Centauro RCV, \$14.50; D356085, 720th MP Btn V100s in Vietnam (Pt. 1), \$6.50; D356086, 720th MP Btn V100s in Vietnam (Pt. 2), \$7.50; D356087, RAAC 3rd Cav Rgt M113A1s in Vietnam (Pt. 1), \$7.50; D356088, RAAC 3rd Cav Rgt M113A1s in Vietnam (Pt. 2), \$7.50; D356089, 20th Engineer Battalion M113A3s in OIF, \$9.50; D356090, 2-8th Inf. (Mech.) M113A1s in Vietnam, \$7.50; D356092, Panzerkampfgruppe Strachwitz (Pt. 1), \$9.50 and D356093, M113 APC Periscope

Bronco

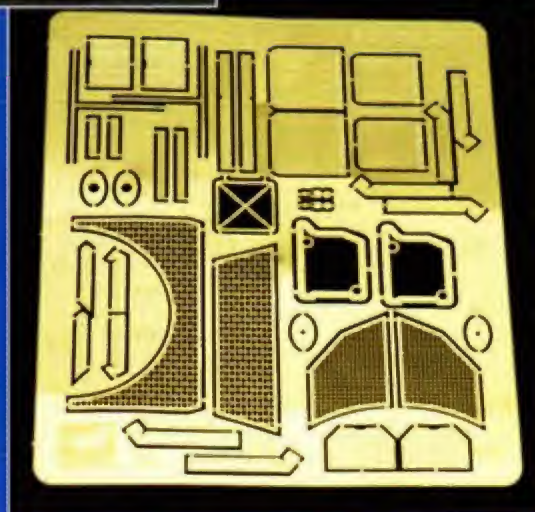
Bronco is to be commended on releasing subjects that the other Far Eastern manufacturers seemed to have ignored. Who would have thought we would ever see early British cruiser tanks, Land-Wasser-Schleppers or even a Bailey Bridge in injection styrene? Seeing is believing, so here's



the list: 35022, German Leichte Panzerspähwagen SdKfz 221 Chinese Version, TBA; 35027, A13 Cruiser Tank Mk IV, \$79.95; 35029, A13 Mk II CT Mk IVA (Early/late production), TBA;



35054, German Light Saloon Coach Model 1937, TBA; 35055, Bailey Type D-D M-1 Bridge, TBA; AB3515, LWS Late Production Track Link Set, TBA; AB3518, Early Version Road Wheel Set for



SdKfz 221, TBA and AB3519, Chinese PLA 200L Oil Drum Set, TBA. They are also adding spin-off versions of these kits in their catalogue.

Bronco has come leaps and bounds from their early days, and can now be counted on to release very nice models. See for yourself at www.bronco-model.com

Surface Inserts - Pink (fits Academy Kits), \$9.50.

Echelon is also known for their very fine mirror sets and they have added a couple of new ones to the lineup: M357135, Mirrors For M151 Series (Academy), \$6.00; M357136, British Scimitar & Scorpion Mirrors (AFV Club), \$6.00; M357137, M1078 LMTV Cargo Truck (Trumpeter), \$6.00 and M357998, Boxer MRAO (Vajra Miniatures), \$6.00.

Finally, here is some extra good news for those of you having a tough time with camo netting for modern vehicles. Echelon has released **Camouflage Netting for Modern AFVs**, \$10.50! This is produced as a decal and is pre-colored. To take a closer look at all this great stuff, look up the Echelon home page at <http://pachome1.pacific.net.sg/~kriegsketten/>

Editions du Barbotin

The fine Frenchmen over at Editions du Barbotin are starting to expand their horizons. They are still turning out great little books such as: **Focus No. 4 Char B1 bis**, €9.95 and **Trackstory No. 10, Renault FT-17**, TBA. On top of this, they have started a decal subsidiary called Miniprint. Their first two releases are **French Tanks and Vehicles 1940 (1:35 scale)**, €7.50 and **French Tanks and Vehicles 1940 (1:72 scale)**, €5.50.

Their website (<http://www.minitracks.fr/>) also announces the release of a resin kit, a 1:72 scale **Citroën Kegresse P28 Armored Car**. This is a limited release only available to subscribers of their Minitracks periodical, which concentrates on 1:72 scale subjects.

Evolution Miniatures

We have news of yet another Russian figure company that will grab your attention with their lineup. Evolution Miniatures is still new, but they already have a healthy list of mini-men on their roster: EM-35001, The officer of Special Troops GRU (Afghanistan 1984-89), \$16.99; EM-35002, German Infantryman World War II, \$16.99; EM-35003, Red Commissioner 1917, \$16.99; EM-35004, Russian Soldiers of Special Troops FSB, \$16.99; EM-35005, German SS Officer World War II, \$16.99; EM-35006, German SS Grenadier World War II-1, \$16.99; EM-35007, German SS Grenadier World War II-2, \$16.99; EM-35008, Soviet Soldier (Anti-tank) 1941-1943, \$16.99 and EM-35009, Gangster, \$19.99.

To take a closer look, surf over to www.evolution-miniatures.com, but for shopping in the U.S. try Military Miniatures Warehouse at www.milminwh.com

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Krupp Protze instruments and placards

Builds two Tamiya Krupp Protze models. Sheet includes instruments and placards which fit the incorrect kit instrument panel PLUS correct instruments and placards which can be used with minor kit modifications.

1/35	AR35292	\$6.95
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Opel Blitz instruments, placards & details

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Sd.Kfz.9 instruments and placards		
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(For the Italeri kit)		
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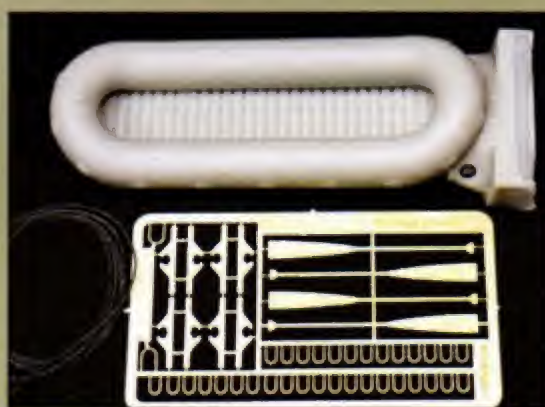
Cammett Ltd

Italeri's huge 1:35 S-Boat has certainly generated a lot of interest. Out of the box the model looks great, but like most injection-molded kits there is always room for improvement. That's where Cammett steps in with the first of a whole series of updates and detailing sets.

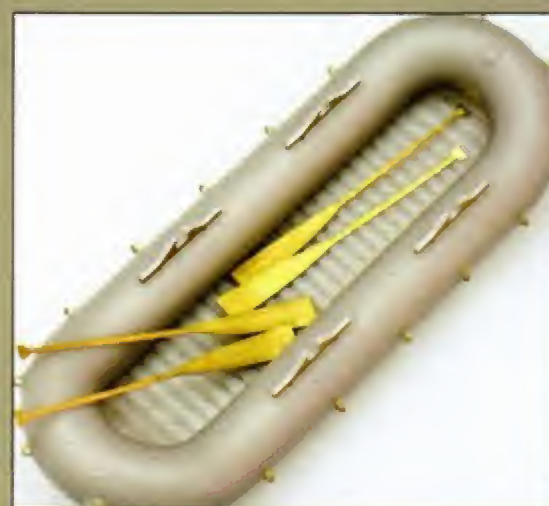
First off we have a set of corrected depth charge rails, **Camb35001, Depth charges Detail Set for Italeri S-100/S38 Schnellboote 6 Depth charges and 2 rails, \$30.00.** Next is a full set of the canvas dodgers, **Camb35002, Canvas Dodgers for Italeri S-100/S38 Schnellboote, \$39.95.** These would tie onto the boat's side rails to help prevent the spray generated by high speed running from constantly swamping the deck. There is a replacement armored bridge section, **Camb35003, Armored Bridge "Skull-cap" for Italeri S-100/S38 Schnellboote, \$29.60.** This set features the correct weld and rivet detailing that's missing from the kit part, as well as scale thickness duck boards that replace the kit's under-scale photo-etch parts. Don't leave home without your dinghy! **Camb35004, Oval Dinghy, \$29.85** gets you there with photo-etched oars and row locks. And the latest addition to the line, **Camb35005, Set of four mines, \$64.25,** is a really cool set of moored contact-type mines. These would look great depicting a boat on mine laying duties in the Baltic Sea.

We guarantee that Cammett has something to make your project extra special—and not in a Timmy from South Park "I'm special" kinda way.

Cammett products are distributed in the U.S.



by Pacific Coast Models. You can visit them online at www.pacmodels.com



DES Kits

Whatever DES releases, you know it's going to be a work of art. These two latest 120mm

figures are no different: **12016-F, 101 Airborne Division paratrooper (June 1944), TBA** and **12017-F, 116 Regt - 29th Infantry Division (June 1944), TBA.** The casting is flawless as usual and the sculpting is superb, making them a figure painter's dream. You just gotta love how much gear that poor old Para has to take that long first step out of a C-47 into occupied Normandy. In comparison, the 29th Infantryman looks almost naked, without much in the way of webbing and personal equipment. If you fancy a break from building armor and want to practice your figure painting skills, then these come highly recommended.

Visit the DES Museum at <http://deskit.online.fr/>



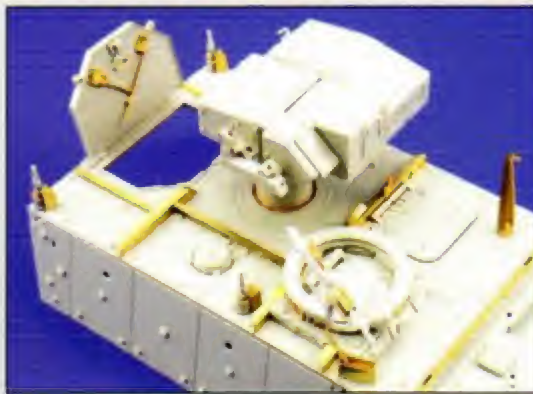
Fighting 48th

If you are a fan of 1:48 scale Allied subjects, Fighting 48th is right up your alley. As we have seen in previous issues, they make some great accessories for Shermans and British stuff in quarter scale. We

caught wind of these new bits: **FF016, Silicone Rubber 1:48 scale Brick Mold, \$5.00; FF018, 17 pdr Wooden Ammunition Boxes 1:48 Scale, \$7.00; FF019, 75mm M3/M4 Wooden Ammunition Boxes 1:48 scale, \$7.00; FF020, British Compo Ration**

Eduard

Eduard keeps pourin' it on month after month, doing their best to keep up with new kit releases. Here is the latest dose of their regular photo-etch sets in 1:35 scale: **36062, SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen 8t (Trumpeter), \$29.95; 36063, M-1127 Mounted rack and belts (Trumpeter), \$34.95; 36064, Churchill Mk III (AFV Club),**



\$22.95; 36065, Staghound AA (Italeri), \$26.95; 36066, SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen 8t tool boxes (Trumpeter), \$22.95; 36067, SdKfz 7 Zugkraftwagen 8t engine (Trumpeter), \$24.95; 36068, M1128 MGS (AFV Club), \$34.95; 36069, M4 Tractor 90mm ammo cases (Hobby Boss), \$34.95; 36070, M4 Tractor engine and mesh (Hobby Boss), \$22.95; 36071, M4 Tractor 90mm (Hobby Boss), \$34.95; 36072, M4

Tractor 155/240mm (Hobby Boss), \$34.95; 36073, M4 Tractor doors (Hobby Boss), \$22.95; 36075, M1128 MGS mounted rack and belts, \$22.95; 36076, M-1134 ATGM, (Trumpeter), \$34.95; 36077, M-706 CAR (Hobby Boss), \$29.95; 53038, S-100 Schnellboot (Italeri), \$59.95 and 53039, S-100 Schnellboot guns (Italeri), \$34.95.



There are also two new Big Ed super sets and one new masking set: **BIG3557, M-7 (Academy), \$115.00; BIG2201, 1:72 BR 52 (Hobby Boss), \$42.95 and XT152, 1:35 AAVP-7A1 (Hobby Boss), \$10.95.** The Eduard website www.eduard.cz is a great place to waste time for those of you who like super-detailed daydreaming—so go check it out, already!

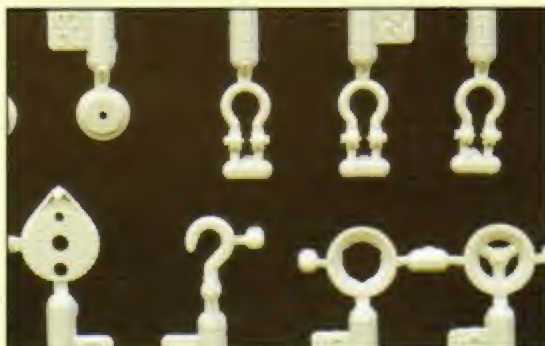
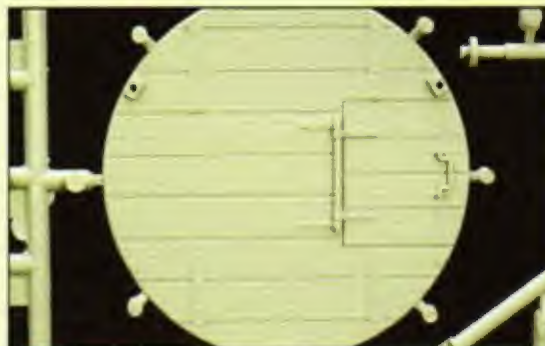
Dragon

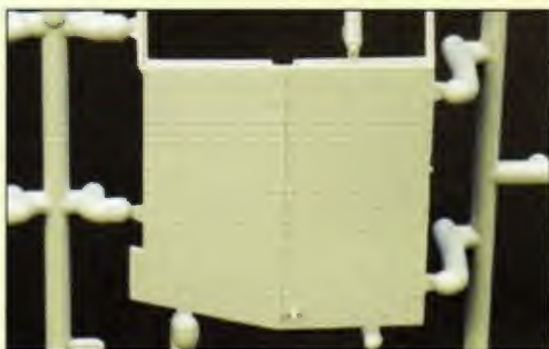
We are all aware of Dragon's mission to take over the modeling world. And they seem to be making progress—they never cease to amaze us at their release schedule and the range of topics they are covering in 1:35 and 1:72 scale. It only seems like two minutes ago that this stuff was on our wish lists! Dragon's new "state of the art" injection-molded kits contain photo-etch frets, turned aluminum barrels, Cartograph decals and either pre-cleaned injection molded "Magic Tracks" or

their new DS100 single-piece tracks. We've never had it so good. Now we just wish the epic battle between Dragon and Trumpeter would end!

As usual, Dragon's list is daunting. But don't be afraid—we'll get through this together. In 1:35 scale: 6225, SdKfz 251/9 Ausf. C (Early Production), \$59.95; 6228, Sherman Mk IC Firefly Hybrid, TBA; 6300, PzKpfw IV Ausf. H Late Production, \$49.95; 6316, SdKfz 250/9 NEU 2cm Reconnaissance, \$42.50; 03-266438, SdKfz 164 Bergepanzerwagen IV, \$53.95; 6397, Jagdpanzer

IV L/70, TBA; 6472, Behehlsjäger 38 Ausf. M, TBA; 6473, 15cm sIG 33 Infantry Gun w/ simplified Shield, TBA; 6487, T34/76 Mod 1942 "Formochka", TBA; 6520, SdKfz 167 StuG IV Early Production, TBA; 6522, PaK 43/3 L/71 mit Behehlslafette, TBA; 6540, SdKfz 161/4 2cm Flakpanzer IV "Wirbelwind," \$49.95; 6332, M3A1 Halftrack (3 in 1), \$49.95; 6385, Totenkopf Division Kharkov 1943, \$14.95; 6441, M4 Sherman "Composite Hull" PTO, \$49.95; 6463, PzKpfw III Ausf. J Initial Production, \$45.95; 6499, M2A1





105mm Howitzer w/ Gun Carriage, \$24.50; 6513, Winter Tank Riders 1943-44, \$13.95; 6514, Monte Cassino Defenders 1944 (Fallschirmjäger), \$14.95; 6515, Allied Assault, Monte Cassino 1944, \$10.95; 6517, Gebirgsjäger Defense Gustav Line 1944, TBA; 6518, German Infantry in Wachmantel Leningrad 1943, \$10.95; 6523, 88mm Flak 37 mit Behelfslafette

(w/ Simplified Base), \$41.50; 6525, Sd.Kfz. 7/1 2cm Flakvierling 38 auf Selbstfahrlafette, \$59.95; 6527, Sherman III DV Initial Production, \$42.95; 6532, German Pontoon Set, \$27.95; 6542, Sd.Kfz. 7/2 3.7cm

Flak 37 w/ Armor Cab, \$59.95; 6549, PzKpfw IV Ausf. J Early Production, TBA; 6550, 3.7cm Flak 43 Flakpanzer IV "Ostwind," TBA and 6562, Sd.Kfz. 7 St (Late Production), \$47.50.

And in 1:72: 7370, Tiger I Initial Production, \$19.95.

In the Cyberhobby line: CY6551, Befehls-Panther Ausf. G (Smart), 42.95 and CY6486, T-34/76

Mod. German Army 1942 Cast Turret, TBA.

If you're new to our little hobby—welcome! Dragon's Orange Box line is just what you're looking for. These are entry-level kits that are priced to sell. Check 'em out: 9104, Firefly IC, Hybrid Hull, \$29.95; 9105, PzBeobWg IV Ausf. J, \$34.95; 9106, StuG III Ausf. E, \$29.95; 9107, Pershing (2-in-1), \$34.95; 9108, JS1/JS2 (2-in-1), \$29.95 and 9109, 3cm MK 103 Zwilling Flakpanzer IV "Kugelblitz," \$29.95. These all come with a bonus figure set.

And lastly, we would be remiss if we failed to mention the new and massive 75021, 1/6 DAK Kubelwagen Type 82, \$99.95. This is a golden opportunity for the super-detailers among you. We hope you have a big display case.

Visit Dragon online at www.dragon-models.com



Fine Molds

Fine Molds has been pretty quiet when it comes to 1:35 scale releases lately, but there is news of one kit that will appeal to Japanese armor fans: FM-28, Japanese Type 95 Heavy Tank 75mm main gun & 37mm Coaxial gun, ¥5,700. This item may be tough to get a hold of in the U.S., so you may want to try ordering it from our friends at www.hlj.com



Boxes 1:48th Scale, \$6.00 and FFDEC011, 1:48 17 pdr Ammunition Box Markings, \$3.75.

The Fighting 48th web shop (www.fighting48th-shop.com) also carries some other lines you may be interested in. Their latest product line additions are RB Models Aluminum Barrels and MiniMali Accessories. Quarter scale fans will definitely want to check this stuff out.

Friendship Models

Our British buddies at Friendship have announced a new resin accessory lineup called Wee Bits. Here is what's available so far: WB35001, British WWII Vehicle Tools Without Straps, \$4.99; WB35002, British WWII Vehicle Fire Extinguishers (Qty 10), \$4.99; WB35003, British WWII 2-Gallon Petrol, Oil, Water Cans (Qty 10), \$4.99 and WB35004, Soviet D-10T 100mm Wooden Ammunition Boxes (Qty 5), \$4.99. The British accessories will come in handy for all those indulging in the glut of UK/ Commonwealth subjects coming out now. Visit Friendship online at www.friendshipmodels.com

Formations

As usual, Formations is doing a bang-up job at churning out mods, accessories and updates for Shermans. Everything on the list this time around pertains to this subject: F106, Low Bustle 75mm Sherman turret w/ British Fittings, \$22.00; F107, M4A3E2 Sherman Jumbo Conversion, \$75.00; F108, Ride Height Spacers for Tasca M3 Style Suspension, \$3.00; F109, M4A1 Thickened Hull and Turret Armor (Tasca), \$45.00 and F110, Late Sharp Nose Transmission Cover (Tasca), \$10.00. The M4A3E2 jumbo conversion looks especially tasty. This is an extensive conversion kit for DR6325 M4A3 76mm Wet. When you're done, all that's left of Dragon's original kit is the bogies and lower hull. The rest is all resin, baby!

Your best bet for browsing and ordering is still at their home page, www.formationsmodels.com



Gaso.line

There seems to be no shortage of new ideas in the Gaso.line camp. Once again we have a big list of 1:48 scale goodies from them for your enjoyment. We'll get

Hard Corps Models

Hard Corps Models has been kinda quiet lately, but now they have busted out some badass accessories for the Academy Merkava IV that really grabbed our attention. The four newest items are: XT-002, Merkava Mk IV Complete Track Set, \$95.00; IDF006, Merkava Mk IV Commander Half Figure, \$11.95; IDF007, Modern IDF Tanker, \$15.95 and IDF008, Merkava IV visible tracks set, \$69.00.

These are limited run items, so you will want to go to www.hardcorpsmodels.com and grab them while they're hot.

www.hardcorpsmodels.com

Merkava Mk. IV

Tracks Sets

Designed by Terry Barrow

XactraX

Visible Set

\$69.00

Complete Set

\$95.00

XT-0002

1/35 Scale



• Scaled From A Real Link • Unrivaled Detail • Minimal Assembly Required •

HARD CORPS MODELS HARD CORPS MODELS HARD CORPS MODELS

Hauler

The Czech photo-etch masters at Hauler have coughed up a healthy release list. These dudes are usually known for their 1:48 scale accessories, but lately they have been doing a few items in 1:35 scale too. The latest 1:35 scale additions are: HLU35016, Transfer Packaging For Sturmiger Rocket (AFV Club), TBA and HLU35017, U.S. Demolition Rocket 7.2 Inch, TBA.



The listing of 1:48 scale accessories is nice and juicy: HLX48282, British Light utility car 10HP (Austin Tilly) (Tamiya), TBA; HLX48283, German Clamps, TBA; HLX48284, T-34/85 Improvised Schurzen (Hobby Boss), TBA; HLX48285, German License Plates With Decals, TBA;



HLX48286, SdKfz 251 Stuka Zu Fuss Conversion, TBA; HLX48287, SdKfz 251/7 Sturmbrücke Conversion, TBA; HLX48288, Sturmiger PE (AFV Club), TBA; HLX48289, Sturmiger-Tiger late Grilles (AFV Club), TBA and HLX48290, 38cm Rocket for Sturmiger - resin/PE set of rockets, TBA.

Finally, we saw a nice new full kit: HLS48009, Klöckner-Humboldt-dentz A330 (Magirus), TBA. Over 16000 Magirus trucks were produced during the war and a number of variants were used, including a Maultier model. This would definitely be an attention-getter when plopped on the contest table.

As usual, Hauler is way ahead of their U.S. importers, so you may want to consider ordering direct from their website (www.hauler.cz).

started with the vehicle conversions and accessories: 48023K, Embase for 20mm Flak 38 on Opel Blitz, €5.02; 48044K, Russian tank destroyer SU-85 (Hobby Boss), €17.39; 48065K, Leichter Beobachtungskraftwagen SdKfz 253 (Tamiya), €6.62; 48068K, Turret Pz III with open hatch, €6.02; 48069K, Metal cabin GMC, €12.04; 48070K, Winch GMC, €4.01; 48071K, Opel blitz Gazogène, TBA; 48072K, Hanomag SdKfz 251/7 genie (AFV Club kit), €6.02; 48073K, Conversion German SdKfz 251/9 Gun 75mm, €9.03; 48074K, Einheits cabin Opel Blitz, TBA; 48075K, Sherman M4A2, U.S. Pacific or Russian (Hobby Boss), €4.62; 48076K, Tracks for Valentine, €4.35; 48079K, Hanomag SdKfz 251/10 37mm PaK 36 (AFV

Club), TBA; 50194K, French light tractor Latil M7 T1, €26.09; 50026K, South Africa Ratel 90, €28.10; 50110K, Russian artillery tractor T-20 Komsomolets, €22.07; 50165K, French PVP Panhard, €23.48; 50191K, U.S. M1 57mm Anti-Tank Gun, €13.31; 50199K, French VPC Nexter/Giat, €37.63; 50200K, French TRC Lorraine 37L, €28.09; 50201K, sWS with Nebelwefer launchers 15cm Panzerwerfer 42, €38.80; 50202K, Staghound Mk III QF 75mm, €28.09; 50549KA, Canvas cover for Halftrack SdKfz 250 (Tamiya), €4.35; 50550KF, Closed canvas cover for Halftrack SdKfz 251 (AFV Club), €4.35; 50551KF, Closed canvas cover for Halftrack SdKfz 251/7 (AFV Club), €4.35 and SPE09K, Buffalo MRAP, €52.84. The last item on the list, the Buffalo MRAP, is especially interesting since it is the only kit we know of this vehicle in 1:48 scale.

These crazy cats don't stop there either. There are some new diorama accessories and figure sets, too. The new dio sets are: DIO48011K, Street and ruin, €19.40; DIO48501, France 1940 - Pz 38(t), €107.86; DIO48503, Minen! Pz III Ausf. N and DAK infantry - Tunisia 1942, TBA; DIO48504, La Grande Guerre St Chamond - France 1917, €124.58 and DIO48505, Gla-Gla!!!! Ardennes 1944 Jagdpanzer IV L/48 Vomag, €107.86. To round things out, the two new figure sets: 50387, German mechanics in supply DAK, €8.70 and 50388, Japanese Officer, tank crew and mechanic, €10.03.

Take a look at www.quarter-kit.com for more information on these great products. And remember you can shop for them in the U.S. through Great Models (www.greatmodels.com).

Hobby Fan

The latest news from Hobby Fan is all about figure sets that are concurrent with AFV Club vehicle kit releases. Their latest little guys are: 588, T-34 Tank Crew - 4 figures, \$48.00; 590, British infantry riding with Churchill Tank - 4 figures, \$48.00; 591, German 15cm Artillery Crew (I) Winter - 2 figures, \$26.00; 592, British Infantry Riding with Churchill Tank (II) - 2 figures, \$26.00 and 593, Sd.Kfz. 251/3 Ausf. C Comm. Vehicle Crew - 2 figures, \$26.00.

Helmuth's Strongholds

We recently got wind of a company from Holland called Helmuth's Strongholds. They produce ceramic diorama accessories, buildings and bunkers. One of our authors received two sets for review and is quite pleased with the quality. The casting quality is good and there are no large air bubbles, a rare thing with plaster building sets. The products are based on actual buildings and bunkers, which gives you a certain comfort level when it comes to realism and accuracy.

Since we haven't covered these guys before, we'll go ahead and give you the whole 1:35 scale list: 35-001, Tobruk Bauform 58 C, €13.00; 35-002, Hockerhindernisse type '42, €18.50; 35-003, SK Geschützstand für



2cm/3.7cm Flak, €29.00; 35-004, Regelbau 667, €41.00; 35-005, Regelbau 672, €46.00; 35-006, Regelbau 612, €54.00; 35-007, Battle For Arnhem Ruined House 1, €28.00; 35-008, Battle For Arnhem Ruined House 2, €32.00; 35-009, Observation bunker Katwijk, €13.00; 35-010, Battle for Arnhem ruined house 3, €34.99; 35-011, Vt-216 Ringstand for wheeled flamethrower, €17.95; 35-012, Hells Highway Ruin no. 1, €13.95; 35-013, Fake MG Nest Panzerabwehrmauern, €9.95; 35-014, Panzerabwehrmauern type 1, €9.95; 35-016, Curbstones, €4.50; 35-018, Stones, €3.50; 35-019, Road Set no. 1, €15.95; 35-020, Pavement tiles, €4.50; 35-022, Garden Wall no. 1, €5.99; 35-023, Hells Highway Ruin no. 2, €18.95; 35-S01, Atlantic Wall Set 1, €35.00; 35-S02, Atlantic Wall Set 2, €32.00; 35-S03, Atlantic Wall Set 3, €54.50 and 35-S04, Atlantic Wall Set 4, €63.50.

The 'Market Garden' series of kits is well worth checking out. They also have kits in 1:72 scale so Braille scale nuts will want to take a look. See it all at www.helmuths-strongholds.com

Just like AFV Club, the skinny on Hobby Fan can be found at the site of their U.S. importer, Merit International (www.merit-intl.com).

Jeepjack

Let us tell you about our friend Tony Gibbs. Tony is an extremely talented industrial designer that has been fascinated by scale models since he was but a

Hobby Boss

There is a mixed bag of variants and completely new subjects on the way from Hobby Boss: 82412, AAVP-7A1 w/ UWGS, TBA; 82414, AAVP-7A1 w/ EAAK (Enhanced Appliqué Armor Kit), TBA; 82425, M26A1 Pershing Heavy Tank, TBA; 82433, German Land-Wasser-Schlepper (LWS) Medium production, TBA; 82434, ZLC2000 Airborne IFV, TBA; 82438, ZTZ 99 MBT, TBA; 82439, ZTZ 99 A MBT, TBA; 82440, ZTZ 99 B MBT, TBA and 82453, ZBD-04, TBA. The announcement of the ZLC2000, ZTZ99 and ZBD-04 is especially interesting and we are

keeping our eyes peeled for them.

Hobby Boss can be found in just about every hobby shop and web store these days, so their new stuff won't

be hard to find. If you do have a tough time, you can always check with their U.S. distributor, Squadron Mail order at www.squadron.com



IMPACT

These guys hail from Singapore and produce the Roll-Royce of upgrades for Tamiya and Heng Leng 1:16 scale radio controlled tanks. Most of their stuff is designed to upgrade their electronic and mechanical components to improve reliability, including gearboxes and suspension systems. But what we like the most is that they make some amazing sets of pre-assembled metal tracks and metal cast sprockets. Although these sets are designed specifically to improve reliability over the kit parts, the offshoot is that they are also much better detailed and offer different track patterns. They even have sets for the Tamiya's new Panzer IV and the brand new KV-1, so if you want to add some real weight to these hefty kits and you have deep pockets then definitely check these list of beauties out. 1-11, Early King Tiger tracks, \$120.00; 2-11, Late production Tiger 1 tracks, \$145.00; 3-11, Impact designed and produced Early Tiger 1 tracks,



\$145.00; 9-11, Pershing T84 metal tracks and drive sprocket set, \$145.00; 10-11, Highly detailed set of T-81 Pershing tracks, \$150.00; 16T001, Panzer III Mid Version tracks, \$98.00; 16T002, Panzer III Winterketten track set, \$104.00; 16T007, Panzer III Late Version tracks, \$98.00; 16T012, Impact set of metal tracks for Tamiya Jagdpanther and Panther G, \$145.00; 16T018, Late King Tiger track with 18 tooth sprockets, \$180.00; 16T031, KV-1 track (84 links per track, spare links 3 RH + 3 LH + 6 Mechanically Locked Retaining pins), \$150.00 and 16T031, SW KV-1 Sprocket Wheels set, \$35.00.

Contact Details: #24-12, Blk 44, Marine Crescent, Singapore 440044. Email address: impact.upgrades@yahoo.com.

At present Impact does not have a dedicated web site but their product range can be purchased at www.mitosal.com

Hooben

Hooben is a Chinese company that specializes in large-scale ship models. While that may not be right up your alley, it turns out that they make high-end RC models, too. Their new offering, 6602, 1:16 T-55 RC, grabbed our at-



tention and we thought we would spread the word. This model apparently comes with all the action features and sound effects we are used to getting with the Tamiya's RC kits.

A trip over to http://www.hooben.com/t-55a_e.html will fill you in. If you want more specific info, you can e-mail these dudes at info@hooben.com



Hussar Productions

When you find yourself in need of a new set of wheels for your kit, you can't just pull into Tire Kingdom. However, you can order some up from Hussar Productions.

These are some of the finest replacement wheels in the business, gents. There is a smattering of other resin accessories in this lineup too. Here is the latest in 1:35 scale:

35069, Mercedes L3000 German WW2 Truck Wheels, TBA; 35072, Kfz 69 Krupp Protze wheels with two types of front tires, \$22.99; 35073, Schwimmwagen Wheels, \$14.99; 35074, Mercedes L4500A Wheels (Zvezda), TBA; 35075, PaK 43/41 Wheels (AFV Club), TBA; 35076, SdKfz 221 Wheels, Type 1 - (Bronco), TBA; 35077, SdKfz 221 Wheels, Type 2 - (Bronco), TBA and 35078, SdKfz 221 Wheels, Type 3 - (Bronco), TBA. They also have some stuff in 1:16 too: 16006, T-34/76 Half Spider Early Wheels, \$44.99; 16007, T-34/76 Half Spider Late Wheels, \$44.99; 16009, 200 L German Fuel



Drums (Set of 3), TBA and 16010, Jerrycans (Set of 3), TBA.

Contact Air Connection at www.airconnection.on.ca to shop and order.



wee lad. His particular obsession has been U.S. soft skins and he has spent a fair amount of his semi-retirement and retirement researching and reverse-engineering various U.S. trucks, including an extensive CAD treatment on the M19 Diamond T tractor.

But Tony's real obsession is and always has been the Sterling T26. This is a very unusual late war heavy tractor prototype that was envisioned as a tank transporter and artillery primer mover. Tony began researching this many years ago using the usual sources that modelers turn to, but information was always scarce. Not one to be daunted, Mr. Gibbs dug deep and he began what would become an epic journey that would eventually lead him to a friendship with the truck's designer!

The information compiled in this book is

fascinating in it's own right and Tony's magnificent illustrations are a treat for the eye, but the story of how it came to be is worth the purchase price. This book covers every aspect of the design, building and testing of the Sterling T26. Here's a rundown the particulars of the publication: 224 pages including 500+ photographs (29 in color), 78 drawings including 1:35 scale plans and elevations and 58 CAD illustrations. Retail price £30.00.

Needless also to say this is a limited edition published by the author and it won't be around forever. If you are interested go to http://web.me.com/tony.gibbs2/Sterling_T26/Home.html as soon as you can to reserve a copy.

Kengi Conversions

We could tell you how we got word of these guys, but if we did we would probably end up in Guanantamo. Let's just say that our inside guy gave us a particularly garbled phone call one day and leave it at that.

The list from this resin company is pretty cool, so read on: M3 LEE Lee (resin conversion for Tamiya M4 Sherman), \$38.00; M3 GRANT Grant (resin conversion for Tamiya M4 Sherman), \$38.00; Panzer 38(t) (resin conversion for Tamiya Hetzer), \$38.00; M3 Stuart "Honey" Light Tank (complete resin kit), \$38.00; M5A1 Stuart - Light Tank (complete resin kit), \$38.00; M8 75mm Motor Gun Carriage (complete resin kit), \$40.00; LVTA1

Legend from Korea

Short Takes just wouldn't be complete without a look at the latest from Legend Productions. Although their releases run the gamut, we have seen a lot of great sets for modern subjects in the last few issues. Their latest list is no exception—still lots of Merkava, M60, Bradley, and Humvee love: LF1178, Merkava Mk 4 Turret/Hull Basket set (Academy), \$18.99; LF1179, Merkava Mk 4 LIC Conversion set (Academy), \$18.99; LF1180, Merkava Mk 4 Detailing set (Academy), \$38.99; 1181, M60A1 Sandbag Armor/MRE Box set, \$16.99; 1182, Bradley Road Wheel set, \$23.99; 1183, V-100 Wheel set (Hobby Boss), \$23.99; 1184, German PzKpfw IV Stowage set, \$39.99; 1185, M1A2(A1) Abrams TUSK Conversion (Tamiya), \$54.99; 1186, Merkava Mk IV Side Skirt Detailing/Loader's Hatch set, \$20.99; 1187, Merkava Mk IV Heavy Duty Side Skirt, \$20.99; 1188, Willys MB Appliqué Armor set, \$20.99;



1189, M2A2(A3) Bradley Detailing set, \$48.99; 1190, U.S. M3A1 Halftrack Stowage set, TBA; 1191, U.S. AFV ECM Antenna set, TBA; 1193, Humvee Interior set, TBA and 1194, M1151 Humvee Conversion set, TBA.

To stay updated on this product line, go to www.wwww-legend.co.kr. For ordering in the U.S., visit their American distributor Squadron at www.squadron.com

Master Box

Some of the announcements from Master Box look pretty promising. These guys have been quietly establishing themselves in the plastic figure game for the last few years and represent a good value for the money. The newest announcements we saw are: 3552, Ticket Home, TBA; 3560, German Motorcycle Repair Crew, TBA; 3568, Horsa Mk 1 Troop-carrying glider, TBA; 3583, Horsa Mk 1 Troop-carrying glider, TBA; 3584, Douglas C-47 Skytrain, TBA; 3585, Douglas C-47, TBA and 3587, German military cargo plane Junkers Ju-52, TBA. There are also rumors of new DAK and British Desert figures in progress.

You can find these sets almost anywhere, but <http://www.mbltd.info> is their homepage and contains the complete listing.



Amtrack (complete resin kit), \$50.00; Type 97 TE-KE Japanese Light Tank (complete resin kit), \$35.00; Mk IVA Cruiser British Light Tank (complete resin kit), \$40.00; Staghound I (T17E1) Armored Car (complete resin kit), \$38.00; T-41 Sherman Track & M3 Bogies, \$20.00 and WE210 British Style Sherman Track M3 Bogies, \$20.00.

Pretty crisp, huh? Apparently, Kengi does not

Mig Productions

Mig's got what you're looking for! More pigments and other cool stuff are coming down the pike. Let's look at the paints 'n pigments first.

F-614, Metallic Pigment Set, €16.00 is an extensive collection of high quality pigments and contains four colors for making metallic effects. The four new colors are also available separately for €4.20 each. The colors are **F-610, Carbon Steel**; **F-611, Stainless Alloy**; **F-612, Brass** and **F-613, Copper**.

P-411, Standard Rust Effects, €5.90 and **P-412, Light Rust Effects, €5.90** are special products for creating rust washes and other various corrosion effects.

There are also a couple of new additions to the 502 Abteilung oil paint line. First is **ABT155, German Three-Tone Fading, €3.10**. This color is for creating wear and aging on German vehicles containing dark yellow bi- or tri-tonal camouflage. Next is **ABT160, Engine Grease, €3.10**. What a cool idea! This will be perfect for creating grease and oil effects on vehicles and machinery.

Now for a few more substantial items. **MP 35-107, Arab Gate 1/35, €29.00**, is an old stone

building perfect for Arabic dioramas. It's cast in lightweight resin. **H10-306, SS-Untersturmführer 1/10, €24.00**, depicts an official of the German General Staff. And just when we thought we'd seen everything, here comes **F 35-650, KV-2X Heavy Walking Tank, Complete Kit, €69.00**. This is the first in a series of vehicles based on a fictional parallel world. This is a complete resin model kit with moveable legs. The kit is based on the old KV-II turret used by the Russians in 1941 but with an improved roof containing updated technology that might have been seen during the 50s. The model will also be available without the turret as **F 35-650, KV-2X Heavy Walking Tank Chassis, €56.00**, which will allow you to use either Tamiya or Trumpeter KV-2 models as donor kits.

The Mig website, www.migproductions.com, is among the most comprehensive in the industry and worthy of a bookmark.

U.S. modelers should keep an eye out for the new MIG USA website and order service, which is due to come online very soon. The entire range of Mig products will be available there and a shopping cart will whisk you right into Miggie heaven. See it all at www.migproductions-usa.com



MiniArt

As usual, there is nothing mini about the release list from MiniArt. They just keep plowing ahead with kit after kit: 35042, Soviet Drivers & Vehicle Accessories, \$11.95; 35050, British Bantam 40 BRC with Crew, \$35.95; 35051, British Jeep Crew, \$15.95; 35057, Soviet Field Kitchen & Horses, TBA; 35058, Soviet SPG Crew Riders, \$15.95; 35060, German Tank Crew France 1944, \$15.95; 35065, German Soldiers at Work, \$15.95; 35066, Soviet Infantry Tank Riders, \$15.95; 35067, Dingo Mk 1B British Armoured Car w/ Crew, \$46.95; 35069, British Armoured Car Crew, TBA; 35070, U.S. Tank Crew (NW Europe), TBA; 35071, British Soldiers Tank Riders, TBA; 35072, German



Armored Car Crew, TBA; 35074, Dingo Mk II scout car w/ crew. Pz.Kmpf Mk I 202(e), \$55.95; 35078, British Tank Crew, TBA;



35081, Soviet Tank Crew on Maneuver, TBA; 35083, British Royal Engineers, TBA; 35084, Kampfgruppe Peiper (Ardennes 1944), TBA; 35089, U.S. 101st Airborne (Normandy 1944), TBA; 35090, Soviet Infantry Ammunition Boxes, TBA; 35091, Soviet Mine Detectors, TBA; 35517, Polish Village House, TBA; 35534, European Barn, \$39.95; 36015, Village Diorama Base, \$28.95; 36027, Country Diorama, \$65.95; 36028, Village Diorama with Fountain, \$31.95; 36030, Diorama with Ruined Church, \$27.95; 36031, Village House with Base, \$39.95 and 36032, Diorama with Barn, \$39.95. OK, you can blink now.

As we have said before, the website for this company (www.miniart-models.com) has a few interesting little features and you should definitely stop by.

have a website, but you can contact them directly using the following information: Ken Swenson, 4543 Calhoun Avenue, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423 e-mail: alliedken@roadrunner.com

Lion Roar/Great Wall

The newest of news from Lion Roar is their sub-line called Great Wall Hobby. All of their previously released plastic kits will be re-packaged under this name and all future full kits will go under this title, too.

Miniman Factory

Those nutty Hungarians at Miniman Factory are starting to show signs of life again. The unusual is the usual for them as you can see by the new announcements: 35005, UAZ-452 Russian Minivan, €76.00; 39M Csaba Hungarian Armored Car, TBA; F002, Soviet Motor Rifle, TBA and F003, U.S. Soldier with Pallet Jack, TBA.

For more details, visit www.minimanfactory.com. You can get this stuff in the U.S. through Sprue Brothers (www.spruebrothers.com).



So far, this is the new stuff: L3511, sWS 60cm Infrared Searchlight Carrier UHU, \$67.50; L3512, Schwere Wehrmachtschlepper sWS General Cargo Variant w/ 4 crew, TBA; L3513, German WWII 200L Oil Drums, \$6.95 and L3514, German WWII 20L Jerrycans, \$9.95.

Update and accessory sets will continue to be released under the Lion Roar label. Here is that list: LE35110, WWII German Helmet Decal Set, \$3.25; LE35111, WWII German Cuff title Decal set, \$5.15; LE35112, German Width Indicators for SdKfz 232, TBA; LE35113, German Width Indicators, \$6.75; LE35114, Centauro 8 X 8 RCV Resin Tire (Battle Style), \$32.95; LE35115, 1:35 WWII US Army Military Vehicle Antenna Unit Base, \$5.50; LAS35012, U.S. WWII M16 Anti-Aircraft Motor Gun Carriage, TBA and LAS35013, Schnellboot S-100, TBA.

If you want a more complete picture of what Lion Roar and Great Wall have, their primary U.S. distributor is Dragon USA (www.dragonmodelsusa.com).



Model Centrum Progres

There is one new announcement from this esteemed Polish publisher since we checked in last time. The new

title is called **Armor Photo Gallery #21 Sherman IC Firefly**. We will give you a review of this new title as soon as we get our paws on it. To see a complete list of titles, surf on over to www.modelbooks.republika.pl. If you want to purchase any, go to their U.S. distributor Squadron at www.squadron.com



New World Miniatures

A few issues back we announced the advent of New World Miniatures with a few samples in Mini-Men. We managed to track down a few new releases for your viewing pleasure.

As you can see, New World has been busy: 35025, LRDG Set 1, TBA; 35026, LRDG Set 2 35037, U.S. Halftrack Crew (6

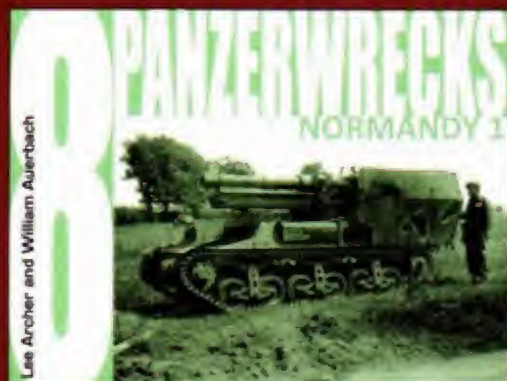


figures), TBA and 35038, LRDG Crew (4 figures), TBA.

We surfed around a bit for availability on New World and found their listing extensive. For more information on the line see them at Michigan Toy Soldier Company (www.mich-toy.com), as well as HobbyLink Japan (www.hlj.com).

Panzerwrecks

In Panzerwrecks 8: Panzerwrecks 8 Normandy, \$29.95, the boys over at Panzerwrecks have switched from the Eastern Front theme



covered in Panzerwrecks 7 back to the Western Front for a splendid little survey of wrecked vehicles from France. For more details or to order your copy today, look it up at www.panzerwrecks.com



Royal

Can we have three cheers for Roberto Reale, the proprietor of Royal Models? The guy is so prolific and so talented, it just makes us want to weep with joy while running naked around the office building. Don't you feel the same way? Don't you? Hello?

OK, well maybe that's just Spud (and Pat to a very limited extent). BUT: we digress! Here is a view of the current bounty: 585, Radiators, €8.00; 587, SdKfz 7 weighted wheels, €12.00; 588, Centauro weighted wheels, €17.00; 589, Italian infantryman and officer (Russia 1944), €24.00; 591, Stowage Sherman Clive, €24.00; 593, Kriegsmarine Sea Man WW2 (incl. 2 heads), €12.00; 595, Carro Armato L6/40, €18.00; 596, Carro Armato M13/40 & M40 (Tamiya), €18.00 and 602, Stowage Carro Armato M13/40, €16.00.

As always, sculpting, casting and packaging is as good as it gets. Take a little trip to www.royalmodel.com for attractive visuals and ordering information—but please, keep your clothes on!



Perfect Scale Modellbau

Our friends at PSM are busy, busy, busy! They tend to keep to the modern stuff, with a bent towards the Bundeswehr. They are kickin' some butt on that Revell Jaguar kit, too.

Here is the current list: 35042, M1A2 TUSK II Conversion kit (Dragon M1A2), €46.50; 35046, Jaguar Einzelgliederkette (for Revell Jaguar), TBA; 35047, Marder 1A3/1A5 openable hatches, €9.90; 35048, M1 Abrams TUSK armour shields, €10.99; 35049, Jaguar kit replacement roadwheels, €11.99; 35029, M668 Lance Loader, €137.95 and 35039, M1A1 TUSK Conversion kit, €26.95. Those TUSK conversion are among the most comprehensive we

have seen to date. We look forward to getting our sweaty mitts on one soon.

Their website is at www.perfect-scale.com



Plus Model

We like Plus. They have a steady stream of new releases and never fail to provide us with slick, shiny photos of their stuff! The other thing we like is that they like the unusual. Case in point is the following list. 149, Girls, \$13.40; 224, PC station, \$23.30; 299, Garage, \$40.20; 305, Rampart of bags, \$17.20; 309, U.S. cans, \$9.10; 324, British Light Truck CS8 early version, \$100.80; 326, Bazooka M1 & M1A1, \$16.90; 327, Bazooka M9, \$16.90; 330, Engraved plate German late, \$7.20; 331, Engraved plate - Lentil type, \$7.20; 332, Engraved plate Modern lentil, \$7.20; 333, Metal net, \$7.20 and 337, Drill press, \$10.70.

See it all at www.plus-model.cz



Resicast

The Commonwealth treats never end from our pals at Resicast. First up is 35.1206, 10cwt trailer, TBA. This will be available as a basic kit as shown and also another kit with different stowage/load sets as number 35.1208.

35.1207, 3-inch mortar Carrier no. 1 Mk I, TBA, is yet another conversion for the Tamiya UC.



This is a conversion for a Mk I version and we are told that a Mk II version will be available shortly.

To accompany the above, we have 35.2318, 3-inch mortar carrier stowage, TBA. There will be enough bits for two different vehicles and all of it will be suitable for either the Mk I or forthcoming Mk II versions.

The Churchill stuff continues to flow with 35.2310, Churchill deep wading, TBA, a conversion for AFV Club Churchill III and 35.2316, Churchill Mk I air intakes, TBA, also for AFV Club Churchill III. This contains air intakes and front armor plate for a Churchill Mk I/II.

Highly useful is 35.2317, No. 19 radio for British vehicles, TBA. This will contain a radio, various accessories, radio guard and A type antenna.

And you gotta have something to put on it, right? 35.2312, Churchill stowage No. 1, TBA, contains enough stowage for two different vehicles.

Get a load of it all at www.resicast.com



Tank from Russia

It's always exciting to see what Tank is up to next. We have a like on the following new 1:35 scale items: T-35103, German German Infantry, TBA; T-35104, German Officer & Infantryman Summer 1939-43(2), TBA; T-35105, Soviet Tanker & German Infantrymen, Summer 1939-43(2), TBA; T-35106, Escaping Soviet Tank Crew Summer 1941-43(3), TBA and T-35107, Soviet Navy Crew With 7,62 MG "Maxim" (1941 - 1945)(2), TBA.

Go to <http://tank-model.ru> right now, please!



Masters Productions

Masters Productions is a little French company with a knack for terrific resin conversions and accessories for softskins and artillery. Three new items have been added since we last checked in: 35055, Canvas For Bantam (Miniart), €10.45; 35056, Wheels For Mercedes 4500 (Zvesda), €11.29 and 35057, Canvas For M4 High Speed (Hobby Boss), €6.69.

We usually shop for Masters through the Blast Models website (www.blast-models.com), since they have a complete listing.

Mec Models

Mec Models has started turning out decal sets (in addition to their diorama accessories) that center around the Vietnam War. It's a short list, but will excite some of you out there: DE-VD01, 1:35th Scale

Tasca

Just a single item from Tasca this round—but it's a good one! 35-L24, Browning M2 Machine Gun Set C w/ Early Type Cradle, ¥1050 is a lovely looking set and will no doubt find a place on your next early war model.



Go to www.tasca-modellismo.com for all the latest on their ever-growing line of products.

Tiger Model Designs

The boys at TMD are keeping up the pace. We thought we were the only ones weird enough to think this is a good idea—but apparently not! 25200, T6 Sherman Prototype (TASCA),



\$75.00, is an intermediate level conversion that includes all the parts necessary to build either the wooden mock-up, initial, or final version of the T6 Sherman prototype. We're already incorporating this into our Sherman project and we can say it's



a very nice set with great casting texture, casting numbers and weld detail. Also new and cool are 25202, M4 Corrected Final Drive Housings (Tamiya), \$5.00; 25207, M4 75mm Turret Loader's Hatch, \$5.00; 25213, M4 Detailed Small Hull Hatches w/ Periscopes (Dragon), \$10.00; 25214, M4 Detailed Small Hull Hatches w/ Periscopes (Tamiya/Tasca), \$10.00; 25215, M4 Detailed Big Hull Hatches w/ Periscopes, \$10.00 and 25217, M4 76mm Turret Loader's Hatch, \$5.00.

TMD would also like you to know that they are selling Vulcan Models 2 pounder from their website, www.tigermodels.com



Tankrats AFV Depot

New from the guys at Tankrats AFV Depot is a range of Industrial Weathering Pigments. These come in much larger tubs than most other pigments on the market. We are happy to report that they are very finely ground and adhere well to a matte paint finish. They are available in 30 different shades, including all the usual dust, rust and earth tones. If you're looking for pigments in larger containers and a wide range of colors, then these are the way to go.



Each of the tubs is \$9.99 and they are available in the following colors. 1101, Black Soot; 1103, Black; 1104, Shadow Gray; 1105, Light Gray; 1106, Dark Gray; 1107, Millstone; 1109, Red Clay; 1110, Pebble Dirt; 1111, Dark Rust; 1112, Red Brick; 1113, Dark Brick; 1114, Tile Red; 1115, Red Clay; 1116, Red Brick; 1117, Quarry Stone; 1118, Worn Brick; 1119, Quarry Stone; 1120, Terra Cotta; 1121, Dry Dust; 1122,



Adobe Dark Dust; 1123, Dark Brown; 1124, Light Rust; 1125, Saddle Brown; 1126, Orange Brick; 1127, Dark Brown Mud; 1128, Mud & Dirt; 1129, Mocha Brown Dirt; 1130, Majestic Mountain Tan; 1131, Light Patina Grass and 1132, Grass stain Patina.

Secondly, we have a product called Black4Track that is designed to weather white metal track from the likes of Frail. We've tried all of these metal-blackening products and most have good results, but none of them are designed just for armor modelers. We can honestly say that Black4Track is the best we have ever tested! Just immerse a short length of Frail track into a small cup containing some Black4Track, and in less than 20 seconds they will turn a really cool shade of brown/gray. Another great thing about this product is that it can be reused. We highly recommend this. It's a good value for the money, too, as a 125ml bottle costs just \$14.99.

For more information on any of their products, see www.tankratsafvdepot.com

Trumpeter

Yes, it could be considered an avalanche. An avalanche of styrene, that is. Works for us! Practice your deep breathing and then absorb this list: 0218, Panzerlok BR57 Armored Locomotive, TBA; 0376, Russian T-62 Model 1962, \$49.95; 0387, Centauro (Late Version), TBA; 0391, LAV-M Mortar Carrier Vehicle, \$39.95; 0425, German Field Howitzer Firing Crew (5 figs), \$19.95; 0426, German Field Howitzer Gun Carrying Crew Set (4 figs), \$19.95; 0427, Soviet B-4 Artillery Crew, \$21.95; 0561, KV1 Model 1939, TBA; 1005, KZKT53L Soviet Cargo Truck, \$94.95; 1006, MAZ 537 (Last Production Variant), TBA; 1502, Canadian Grizzly APC, TBA; 1506, Canadian Husky (Improved Version), TBA; 1507, German SdKfz 7 Mittlere Zugkraftwagen 8t Late Version, \$68.95; 1508, Panzertragerwagen, TBA; 1509, Geshutzwagen, TBA; 1516, Panzerjäger Trebwagen 5, TBA; 1517, WWII German Army Railway Gondola Car, \$59.95; 1518, German Flatbed Railcar, TBA; 1519, LAV-III Kodiak, TBA; 1521, LAV-A2 IFV, TBA; 1522, Challenger II (Enhanced Armor), TBA; 01524, German 2cm Flakvierling 38 auf Selbst-



fahrlafette (SdKfz 7/1 Late Version), TBA; 1525, German 3.7cm Flak 37 auf Selbstfahrlafette (SdKfz 7/2 Early Version), \$69.95; 1526, German 3.7cm Flak 37 auf Selbstfahrlafette (SdKfz 7/2 late version), \$69.95; 1527, German 3.7cm Flak 43 auf Selbstfahrlafette (SdKfz 7/2), \$69.95; 1541, M1117 Guardian, \$37.95; 1557, JGSDF Type 96, TBA; 2307, Soviet B4 Model 1931 203mm Howitzer, \$69.95; 02313, 17cm K-18 Heavy artillery, TBA; 2319, M198 (Late), TBA; 4190, PMC (private contractors) in Iraq (Vol. 1), \$17.50; 4120, PMC (private contractors) in Iraq (Vol. 2), \$17.50; 4121, German ISAF in Afghanistan, TBA; 4122, German KsK Bundeswehr, TBA; 4123, USMC M252 Mortar Crew, TBA; 4124, Modern U.S. Army Armor Crewmen & Infantry, TBA; 6609, German 17cm K Gr.39 Ammo, \$22.95; 6610, German 21cm K Gr.18 Ammo, \$22.95; 6611, LAV-III/Stryker Windscreen, \$14.95; 6612, U.S. Army Military Tow Bar, \$14.95 and 6613, U.S. M151 Protector Remote Weapons Station, TBA.

In 1:72 scale the offerings look like this.: 7202, King Tiger Henschel Turret, \$19.95; 7270, USMC LAV-C2, \$19.95; 7271, USMC LAV-AT, \$19.95; 7264, U.S. M26(T26E3) Pershing, \$19.95; 7276,



M1A1 Abrams MBT, \$19.95; 7277, M1A1 w/ Mine Clearing Blade System, \$19.95; 7288, U.S. M46 Patton, \$19.95; 7295, M2 Bradley, \$19.95; 7296, M2A2 Bradley, \$19.95 and 7299, U.S. M26E2 Pershing, \$19.95.

You can take this in at your leisure at www.trumpeter-china.com

Verlinden Productions

VP seems to be getting up and around as of late. Their current list includes a load of new items, as well as a sprinkling of those golden oldies. This is good news to us! Here's what we've got (all 1:35 scale, unless noted): 2475, Slate Roof Section, \$29.95; 2476, Sunken German Mini Subs (2) WWII, \$42.95; 2477, Diorama Base Countryside Road, \$36.95; 2478, U.S. GIs WWII Running, \$14.95; 2479, 120mm Cossack Cavalry Corps in German Service WWII, \$16.95; 2480, Sunken LCM w/ Photo-Etched Parts, \$64.95; 2481, Israeli Figure Conversion Parts, \$12.95; 2482, Date Tree



(1) (Resin Trunk & Photo-Etched Leaves), \$14.95; 2483, German Dock WWII Diorama Kit,

\$14.95; 2484, Tires, Wheels & Rims, \$16.95; 2487, Workshop Tools & Equipment w/ Etched Tools, \$22.95; 2488, Dock/Train station Crane, \$21.95; 2489, Roof Tile Section Western Europe Style, \$11.95; 2491, Panzer Grenadiers (2 figs), \$14.95; 2492, Bombed Out Street, \$34.95; 2493, U.S. Tanker & Infantry (2 figs), \$14.95; 2503, 1:35 Farmer's Wife & Daughter (2 figs), \$10.95; 2505, 1:35 Bolts, Screws & Fasteners, \$8.95; 2507, 1:35 Roof Tile Section Italian Style, \$11.95; 2509, 1:35 WWII German Weapons Slings, \$8.95; 2510, 1:35 WWII Vehicle Tool Clamps, \$8.95 and 2511, 1:35 U.S. WWII Tank mechanics, \$14.95.

See their website at www.verlindenonline.com for ordering and new product information.



Panther G, \$22.00.

This is another of their laser cut paper accessories and is designed to fit the Tamiya Panther G early. Since the zimmerit pattern is produced on paper, you can glue it right on a primed surface with white glue with no need for sanding. To order your set or anything else, pay a visit to www.monroeperdu.com

Pegaso

Pegaso cranks out yet another 1:35 scale offering. This time it's PT-044, German Tanker. This is a casual looking guy, hanging out with his left hand in his pocket. It was sculpted by Yukio Honma and it will retail for €11.67.

See all that Pegaso has to offer at www.pegaso-models.com

waterslide decals for various Vietnam vehicles and nose-art for 4 different V100s/XM706s, €9.95; DE-VD02, 1:35th scale waterslide-decals for various Vietnam vehicles and nose-art for 4 different V100's/XM706, €9.95; DE-AP02, M113 Vietnam Decal Sheet, TBA; DE-GT01, M113 Vietnam Decal Sheet, €4.20 and DE-GT02, M113 Vietnam Decal Sheet, €4.20.

Anyone humping through the boonies of a 'Nam diorama should stop by their website (www.mec-models.com) and investigate further.

Monroe Perdu

Monroe Perdue is not the most prolific company, but their products are exquisite. We have just one new item from them: 051, Zimmerit for Tamiya

Vallejo Acrylics

If you are looking to enter the world of Vallejo in a big way, we've got a set for you! 72172, Basic 72 Color Set gets you going with a substantial plastic case stuffed with 72 basic colors of Model Color, two bottles of medium (not shown in our photo), three Toray brushes



and a color chart. The set retails for \$215.96 on the Squadron website (www.squadron.com), which is a pretty good bargain when the cost of the individual bottles and the brushes are factored in. Plus, the case is a nice safe place to store your investment.

The Vallejo website, www.acrylics-vallejo.com, is especially helpful.

Vulcan Scale Models

In case you have a hankering for WW2 British light artillery, there is now an injection-molded kit of the 2-pounder. 56001, **Ordnance QF 2 Pdr British Anti-Tank Gun**, \$23.99, is a teeny kit of this well-known gun.

Our sample was provided by the fellows at Lion Marc (www.lionmarc.com), who stock the kit in their online shop.



R&J Products

R&J, known for hosting a veritable herd of resin kits and accessories through their mail order business, also cranks out a resin bit now and again.

Well, it's that time again, so revel in this following list: **RJ35202, Modified Early Brummbar Update**, TBA; **RJ35214A, Panzer I Spare Road Wheels**, \$9.00; **RJ35214B, Panzer IB Wheels**, \$10.00; **RJ35221, 21cm rockets**, \$8.00; **RJ35256, T-28 Road Wheel Set**, \$15.00; **RJDP721, Palm Super Log Set**, \$28.00; **RJDP16001, 1:16/120mm scale Coconut Palm Log**, \$11.00; **RJ16001, M1 Garand**, \$7.00; **RJ16035, 1:16/120mm Kar 98 Rifle**, \$5.00 and **RJ16042, MG 42 w/ bipod**, \$12.00. See their advertisement in this issue for more information.

R&J is expanding their 1:16 line and they'd love to hear from you if you have any cool ideas. Get on up to www.rjproducts.com to find out more.

Reality in Scale

Reality in Scale, denizens of diorama land, bring us more accessories to spice up our miniature existence. The latest list is a mix of scales, as well as interior and exterior goodies (as of press time, prices are only available in Euros): **35076, The Farmhouse 1:35 Resin and several accessories**, €27.50; **35077, The Palazzo 1:48**, €24.50; **35078, Gymnasium 54mm**, €18.50; **35079, Square Well 1:35**, €10.75; **35080, The Bust 54mm w/ 2 Carpets**, €11.75; **35081, The Urn 54mm**, €11.75; **35082, Carpeting on Real Cloth design A**, €6.50; **35083, Carpeting on Real Cloth design B**, €6.50; **35084, Carpeting on Real Cloth design C**, €6.50; **35085, Carpeting on Real Cloth set of 3 solid colors**, €6.50; **35086, "The Unfortunate Beetle" 1:35**, €16.50 and **35087, Large Cobblestone Road Section with Sidewalk**, €17.50.

Get all the current dope at www.realityinscale.com

Squadron/Signal

David Doyle does great stuff for us, but he also tirelessly toils for several other publishers, too. Like Einstein, he never actually sleeps. New from Squadron in their Walk Around series and bearing the Doyle label are **5710, GPA/DUKW Color Walk Around**, \$18.95 and **5711, Pre-Standardized Jeep Color Walk Around**, \$18.95.

Both are worth checking out at www.squadron.com

Wings & Wheels Productions

WWP rocks on and on. In addition to filling our book review pages with new releases, WWP also has a long list of forthcoming titles: **R055, Dingo Scout Car in detail**; **G024, Japanese 4x4 LAV in detail**; **R 053, Humber Mk II Scout Car in detail**; **R 048,**

M101 105mm Howitzer in detail; **G 023, BTR-70 in detail**; **G 022, KaJaPa: German Modern Kanonenjagdpanzer 90mm & Beobachtung Panzer in detail**; **R 051, WWII GMC DUKW in detail** and **R 054, WWII MB Willys Jeeps in detail**.

Two fingers can transport you instantly to www.wwpbooks.com

Zvezda

Occupying its traditional place at the end of Short Takes, Zvezda is now offering **3607, German Motorcycle R12 w/ Sidecar and Crew**, \$21.95 and **3611, Dogs fighting against tanks**, TBA. We are looking forward to seeing that last one!

Dragon USA handles Zvezda in the States (www.dragonmodelsusa.com) and www.zvezda.org.ru will take you (virtually) right to Russia.

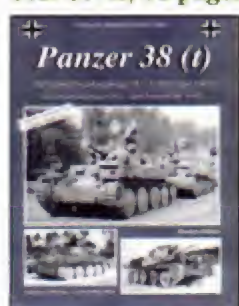


Panzer 38(t)

By Markus Zollner

Tankograd Publishing

Soft Cover, 64 pages B&W with color



late-model 38(t) and a succinct historical overview. This is followed by a statistical profile of the different

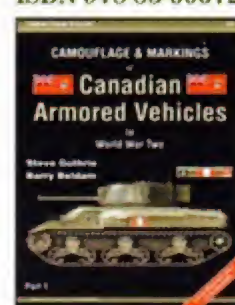
variants. The rest of the volume is dedicated exclusively to well-captioned photos of the 38(t) in action in German service. All in all, this is a very good reference source for those great Tristar and Dragon 38(t) kits that have been released in recent years.

Camouflage & Markings of Canadian Armored Vehicles in World War Two

By Steve Guthrie and Barry Beldam
Model Centrum Progres

Soft Cover, 48 pages B&W with color

ISBN 978-83-60672-08-2



MODEL CENTRUM PROGRES books run the gamut when it comes to WWII armor, but lately they have been concentrating on Great Britain and the Commonwealth. **Camouflage & Markings of Canadian Armored Vehicles in World War Two, Part 1** is

the start of a survey of Canadian armored vehicles and formations over the entire course of the war. The book starts with a concise history of Canadian deployment, and then

moves on to a textual survey of their vehicle marking system. The bulk of the book consists of period photos from training in Canada, Britain and the Dieppe Raid. There are some superb shots of Ram tanks, Bren carriers and different armored cars. To round things off, there is a color plate section and an extensive graphical exposition that matches up formation markings to their respective vehicles. The colorful markings and variety of vehicles presented here will spark your interest in Canadian subjects as we anxiously await Part 2 of this series.

Gun Power 26: Churchill Vol. 1

By Lezek Moclulski

AJ Press

Soft Cover, 176 pages B&W with color

ISBN 978-83-7237-195-9



NEED A REFERENCE FOR THAT shiny new AFV Club Churchill in your stash? Well, look no further. AJ press is well known to many modelers thanks to their exceptional multi-volume series on the Panther and the Tiger. Churchill Vol.1 continues this trend.

The first section expounds on the development and different marks of the gun tank. The second section details many of the specialist variants including flame throwing tanks, combat engineer variants and engineering and recovery vehicles.

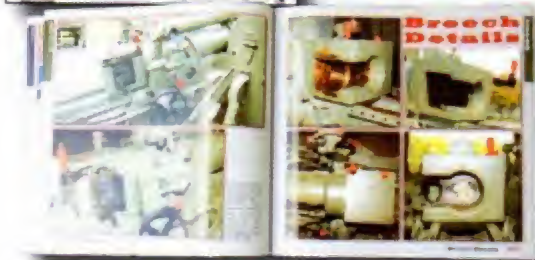
The third and final section is on the 3-inch gun-carrier. This unusual version mounted this gun in a fixed superstructure in a similar way to the German Sturmgeschütz vehicles. At the back of the book is a short profile of the production run followed by a slew of scale plans and color plates for different variants of

this versatile machine. If you are building a Churchill, you will want this book, especially if you are doing any conversion work.

M101A1 105mm Howitzer in Detail
By Frantisek Koran and Jan Horak
Wings & Wheels Publications
Soft Cover, 48 pages full color
ISBN 978-80-86416-80-9



SEEING NEW TITLES FROM Wings & Wheels really gets us charged up. We usually get a whole stack of them at once, which makes it kind of tough to pick one to review—especially since



they are all so good. With the release of Dragon's M2A1 105 mm howitzer though, the choice this time was obvious. Just to avoid confusion, the M101A1 is a post-war version of the M2A1 105mm howitzer that became famous in WWII. As explained in the book, the main differences between the M2 and the M101 are a new sight and a longer barrel on the latter model. The walk around photos of the M101 preserved at Artilleriemuseum Braschaat are a detail treasure trove for those building the new Dragon kit. But the fun doesn't end there folks! There is also an extensive photo essay on the 105 mounted in the M7 Priest. Perfect for that Academy kit. To top it all off, the book ends with a photo feature on 105mm howitzer ammo containers. This is a sure-fire winner for wannabe Red Legs everywhere.

Panzerwrecks 7: Ostfront
By Lee Archer And William Auerbach
Panzerwrecks
Soft Cover, 96 pages B&W
ISBN 978-097541837-6



THE PANZERWRECKS series continues to roll on and on long after we thought the well of interesting photos would run dry. Panzerwrecks 7 is much like the other volumes with

lots of nice photos and informative captions, but with a twist. The source material for the previous volumes has been mostly from the Western Front. This time around, however, Lee Archer and William Auerbach have gone to great lengths to cover Eastern Front topics. Included are four feature essays: Panzer wrecks in Uman, Cut off in Chernivtsi, Turan tanks on a Train and Surrender in Kurland. Smaller one or two page subjects are sprinkled liberally throughout. Most of the photographs are of late war vehicles after the Russians turned the tide, so



you'll find lots of Tigers, Panthers, late Panzer IVs and StuGs to drool over. Perhaps the best photo essay of the whole book is the one on the Turan tank—it would be really cool to see a good rendition of this in styrene. As a bonus, there are also some nice shots of captured German vehicles pressed into Russian service. In all, this is a wonderful addition to a great series that has provided much inspiration to armor geeks everywhere.

Cadillac Gage V-100 Commando Walk Around
By David Doyle
Squadron/Signal
80 pages full color
ISBN 978-0897-574-7



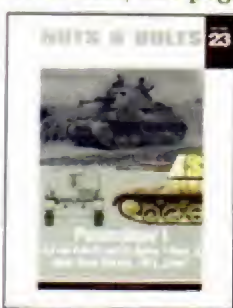
SQUADRON/SIGNAL PUBLICATIONS continues to add titles to its Walk Around series at a terrific rate. This book follows the usual format, with a brief in-



roduction followed by boatloads of full color walk around photographs, just as the title states!

There are several different vehicles presented here. In addition to the photographs, production differences are highlighted with line drawings. The photographs themselves are a mix of overall and close-up detail shots, each with an informative caption. Both the interior and exterior of these vehicles are given extensive coverage. As usual, this addition to the series does not disappoint, giving you lots of information at a very decent price. Modern armor fans and anyone building the new Hobby Boss kit will love this book.

Nuts & Bolts 23 Panzerjäger I 4.7 cm Pak(t) auf Pz.Kpfw. I Ausf. B ohne Turm (Sd.Kfz. 101) "Ente"
By Duske, Greenland and Terlisten
Nuts & Bolts Verlag GbR
Soft Cover, 119 pages B&W with color



WELL HERE WE ARE AGAIN, BACK at the pulpit howling about the grace and goodness of the latest Nuts & Bolts book. We all know how good these titles are. You really don't need another reference once you have one of these little babies on hand.



Volume 23 of the series profiles the Panzerjäger I. This vehicle came about from experiences in the Polish campaign that emphasized the need for higher caliber, more mobile anti-tank guns. To try to meet this need, the Germans threw a Czech 4.7cm anti-tank gun on the tried and tested Panzer I chassis. This book follows the usual Nuts & Bolts format. It begins with text on history and development and then moves on to production, unit allocation, and unit histories. Period photos, line drawings, color plates and markings follow in sequence. At the back is a full color walk around of the

last known surviving vehicle. On the inside covers is a comparison by Tony Greenland between the new Dragon kit and the older Italeri offering. People wanting to get serious about their Panzerjäger I kit, old or new, need look no further for reference.

Focus No.4 Char B1 Bis
By Pascal Danjou
Editions du Barbotin
Soft Cover, 50 pages B&W with color
ISBN 978-2-917661-05-5



A LITTLE WHILE BACK EDITIONS du Barbotin popped out a splendid little volume on the Char B tank as the third title in their Trackstory series. It was and still is one of the best background references on the subject. Their most recent release, Focus



No. 4 Char B1 Bis, is an excellent companion to the aforementioned title.

As with the other Focus volumes, this little book contains extensive walk

around coverage of a surviving vehicle. It starts out in the usual way, with a French/English introduction covering the historical background of the vehicle and a collection of period photos. The next subsection is perhaps the coolest written information in the book: an extensive list of tank names and their units! No excuse for getting this wrong on your next Tamiya Char B1 kit. The bulk of the book consists of a full color walk around of the vehicle located at Saumur. There are both exterior and interior shots with lots of close-ups for the detailing freaks among us. Along the way, the captions cover the different modifications that have taken place on the exhibit vehicle since manufacture. This book definitely motivates you to put a hurtin' on your Tamiya kit!

Berlin 1945
By Stavropoulos, Vourliotis, Ternoitis, Kotoulas, Valmas and Zouridis
Persicopio & Squadron/Signal
Soft Cover, 128 pages B&W with color
ISBN 978-0-89747-586-6



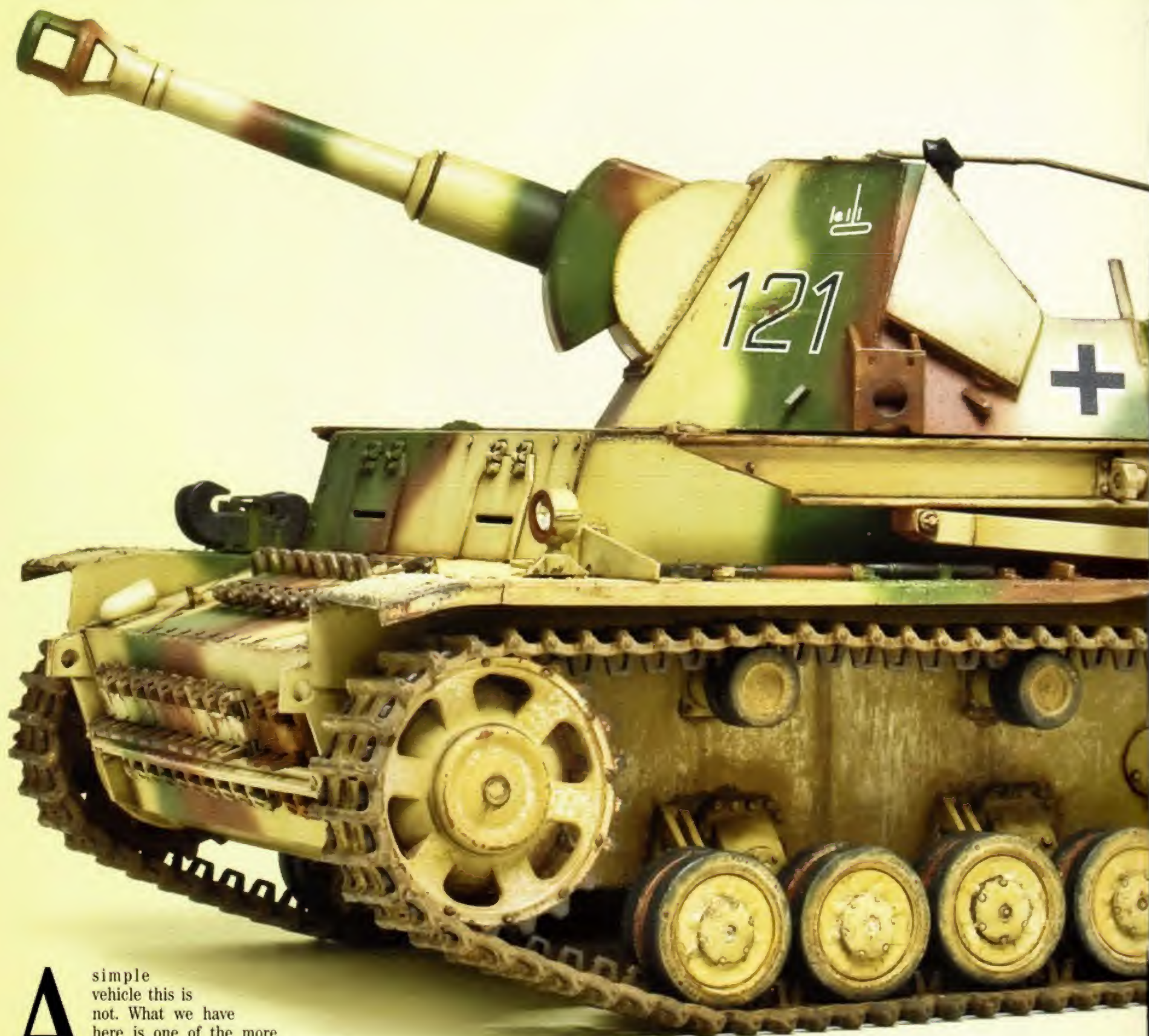
THE GREEK COMPANY PERISCOPIO recently teamed up with Squadron to bring some of their publications to the U.S. audience. The most recent title in their Great Battles of the World lineup is Berlin 1945. This is a comprehensive overview of the last great European battle of WW2.



This volume first gives you an overview of the battle itself before delving into interesting aspects of the event, such as the bunker, weapons, commanders and opposing forces. Beautiful color plates of vehicles and uniforms appear throughout, along with plenty of period photographs. The Battle of Berlin is a very popular modeling subject and this new title serves well as a great primer if you are looking for some inspiration for your next diorama.

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MIGHTY GRASSHOPPER



A simple vehicle this is not. What we have here is one of the more unnecessarily complicated yet “oh so cool” Wehrmacht prototypes. The vehicle’s name is a good indication of its complexity—and I’m not even sure what its proper form is. Dragon uses the form as it appears in the article title, but the *Encyclopedia of German Tanks of WWII* gives it a slightly different name: the 10.5cm leFH18/1 L/28 auf Waffenträger GW IVb, or Heuschrecke 10 for short. Loosely interpreted, this alphanumeric soup means that the

vehicle is a tracked, self-propelled light artillery weapons carrier with removable turret and armament. What purpose would such a vehicle serve? That’s a good question, and one that the Germans tried to answer several times. Both Krupp and Rheinmetall-Borsig produced working prototypes, each using the very successful leFH18 10.5cm field gun as the basis for the armament. Dragon’s Krupp version, the only version currently available

as a kit, is the subject of this article.

The alleged aim of this engineering exercise was to provide “mobility” for a “fixed” artillery piece, and even to use the removable turret as a fixed pillbox if necessary. This concept had already been (unsuccessfully) attempted during World War One. Although reference material on the Grasshopper is pretty sparse, the fact that the vehicle was never put into production makes it pretty clear that the idea

ASSHOPPER

1/35 Dragon Heuschrecke IVb 10.5cm le F.H. 18/6(Sf.) auf Geschützwagen III/IV



tanked. The Hummel and Wespe both proved superior in production efficiency and in the field, so the Heuschrecke project never got off the ground.

Construction, Smart Kit style

Although the kit's box art lacks the Smart Kit designation, much of what we've come to love from previous SK efforts can be found inside. Like most armor kits, construction begins with the suspension. This was once a tedious affair, but the Heuschrecke 10 has the benefit of the SK suspension components

(probably from the new Hummel kit), and dare I say these are very similar to their Tamiya counterparts—oh, the blasphemy! Well, I have no complaints, as this switch greatly speeds up the construction of the chassis and the two-piece road wheels. Because I use spray masks for painting road wheels (aka circle templates for the budget conscious modelers out there), I have never liked the separate tire system used in Dragon's previous efforts.

These fancy slide-molded parts attach to a new lower hull, which represents the larger prototype chassis developed from the Hummel III/IV chassis. Thanks to the new tooling, steps 1 and 2 are nice

and easy. However (and this is no fault of Dragon's), the interior components in these steps already require painting at this very early stage. This isn't the enormous pain in the butt it might have been, though. Since this is technically an open-top vehicle, all visible interior areas can be painted the same color as the exterior: Dunkelgelb. Yeah!

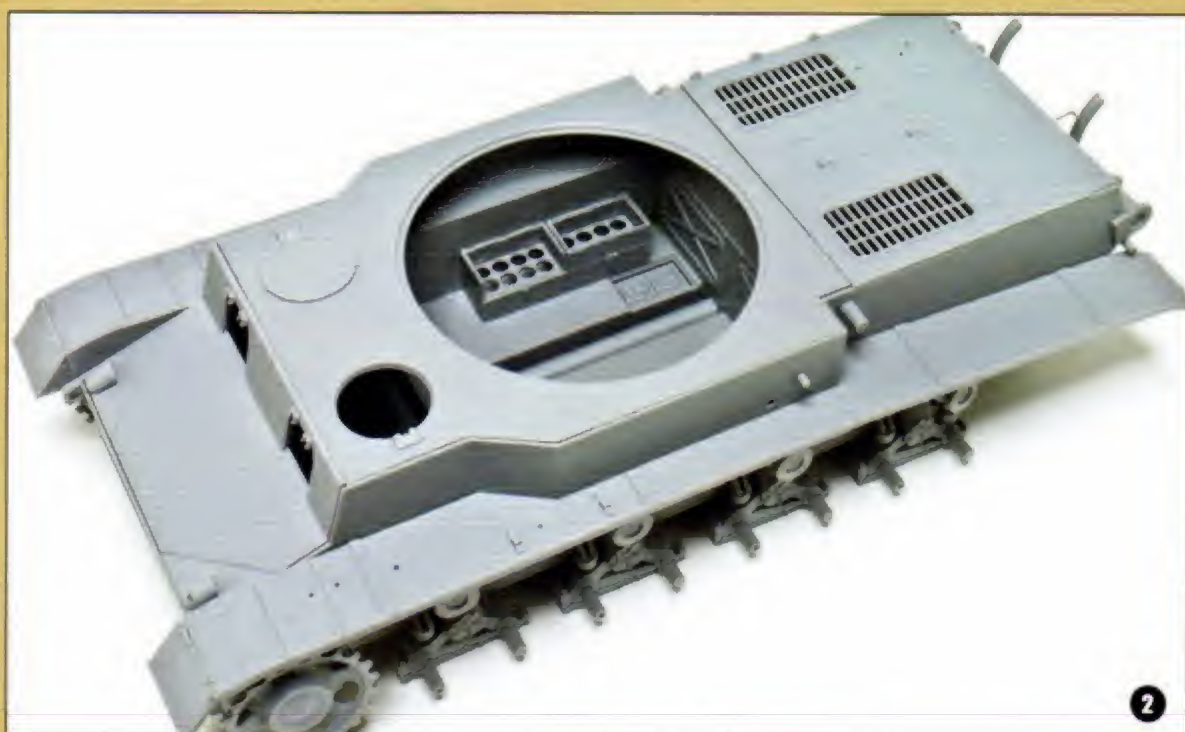
Get the turret ready, too

In light of this fact, I skip ahead and build the turret and gun assembly next (steps 13-20). As usual, however, I can't be satisfied with a simple solution. How about some hairspray over red primer, then a coat of dark yellow for chipping fun? Sounds like a plan! After assembling the lower hull interior (no driver's compartment or engine is provided in the kit) and the turret with gun breech, I paint all of the interior walls, floors, ammo lockers, gun breech and seat with Vallejo Model Color 982 Cavalry Brown, which is a fantastic red primer color straight out of the bottle. I cover the remaining bare plastic with Tamiya XF-69 NATO Black.

While the red primer dries, I use my airbrush to spray a small amount of hairspray over the freshly painted parts. Once that's dry, I spray a dark yellow made from a 50-50 mix of Tamiya XF-60 Dark Yellow and XF-55 Deck Tan. I carefully leave a few edges of red primer exposed to help facilitate the chipping process that follows, for which I use the "brush removal with water" chipping technique that I've described in previous articles. To weather everything, I apply some dark washes, stains and pigments to replicate a well-used fighting vehicle. In reality there probably was not as much wear as I show, but I always like to convey a lived-in feeling. Some guys refer to this as "artistic license," but I just like my vehicles to look "driven hard and put away wet."

There are a few items that are worth pointing out. The battery compartment and ammo locker doors (parts D30 and D60) can be portrayed either open or closed. I build mine closed, but there is some ammunition included in the kit if you go with the open option. Wires, however, would need to be added for the exposed battery if you show that open too. Beyond that, the fighting compartment is relatively empty and exposed, so a few more items like stowage racks, wiring, personal weapons and gear are needed to faithfully replicate this area. As a matter of fact, this kit has plenty of these items, but in the interest of time I pass on adding them to this model. I am sure the aftermarket manufacturers will step in soon with appropriate resin and photo-etch sets to fill these large voids, since this kit is ripe for super-detailing.

Once the interior is finished, I go back to building the chassis. I attach the bogies to the hull along with the dampers and return rollers. I leave the road wheels, drive sprockets and idlers loose (including the idler mounts, part A40) to facilitate painting and track installation. Because I plan to keep the lower hull free from heavy dirt and mud build-up, this is very important—otherwise I'd have to hand



1. Construction of the lower hull and suspension is straightforward. The new hull is unique to this vehicle. **2.** Dry fitting the upper hull plates and fenders reveals some gaps that will require filler, and I decide to recreate the weld beads during the process. I also want to see how much of the empty driver's compartment is visible. After I take this photo I remove the two front fenders to make the model more interesting. **3.** Another view of the interior shows the sparse layout. Aftermarket, please come to the rescue! **4.** The rear end is well rendered with excellent exhaust pipes. I drill out the openings of each pipe to represent thinner sheet metal. **5.** Detail view of the Smart Kit suspension bogie. Dragon certainly was "smart" to add these pieces from their corporate sprue bin, even though they are not moveable.

They make for a much more efficient build compared to earlier efforts like the Panzer IV Ausf. E kit. **6.** The best part of the kit is the turret and gun assembly; detail is accurate and crisp. Of course, a few details are missing such as small side fittings and wiring, but overall the impression is favorable here. Fit and finish are excellent and only the breech seam needs some filler. The upper turret sides are positional and I decide to open them to better show off the interior. One note of caution: the delicate center brace is very fragile and I manage to break it repeatedly, so I recommend leaving it off until painting time. Note the wheel mount, which can be mounted either on the side as shown here, or on the back end where I ultimately place it.

paint 16 rubber tires into the wee hours of the morning without getting any paint on the tracks. No thank you, there are better ways to skin that cat.

Seal it up

A unique aspect of this kit is the three-piece upper hull assembly process. The size of this hull is very impressive, quite a bit larger and bulkier than a Panzer IV gun tank. I have no idea why Dragon went this route (admittedly, though, it will make opening up the model later on for super-detailing a lot easier), but it does cause the only real problem I encounter during construction. During dry fitting, I discover a slight warping of the lower hull vertical sides and this makes fitting the front plate (part B14) and middle plate (part C1) a little tricky. They

simply do not sit flush into their respective slots. And you can't splay the side walls with a brace because of the exposed interior, so the only real solution is to fit the parts as best you can with the help of a little sanding, and then redo all of the welds for these seams to re-establish a uniform weld around the upper hull edges. This is actually not too hard to accomplish. For my welds I use a thin bead of Gunze Sangyo Mr. Dissolved Putty, which I texture with a toothpick.

With the upper hull nicely sealed, I proceed to add the fenders, leaving off the front ones (parts B4 and B5) at this stage. I thin the exposed front and rear edges with my hobby knife and add some very minor dents for a touch of style. Now we're getting somewhere. At this time, I do not attach the anten-

na (part C15) and taillight bulb (part B20), leaving them off to paint them separately. I have the main hatches closed, and in my haste forget to add the missing handles on top of each one, but that's a very easy fix. Naturally, I notice my error after applying paint, but I promise they will be added by the time you read this.

Hull details

For the sake of completeness, I should mention some of the other minor discrepancies between the kit and my reference photos. The tow shackles (parts K17) are too large, as is the jack assembly. Unfortunately, save for scratch building new ones there's not too much you can do about it. As a matter of fact, Dragon would have you mount the jack

backwards in order to make it fit with the nearby spare road wheel placement and crane frame rail, all of which fit closely together on the right front fender. I place mine correctly per my photos, but the jack handle (part G58) interferes with the fit of the spare wheel. I leave off the spare to accommodate it. Hummel and Nashorn SPGs both do without spare wheels in many cases, so I figure my Heuschrecke 10 can too.

The placement for the tow shackle bracket (part M21) is vaguely illustrated in the instructions. Photos show it sitting tight to the front hull corner and slightly left of the jack when viewed from above, so this is where I place mine in step 11.

One of the few details that I make for this kit is the missing vertical support plates adjacent to each fender bracket (parts B15-B18). I cut .005 styrene strip to match and then add bolt heads to each according to the photos. Nothing terribly exciting, I know, but it makes a big difference.

Now to the tool stowage—I decide to rearrange mine to give it a different look from the existing Aberdeen prototype. Because the rear engine deck has placement points for tools K1, K2, K4 and K5, I add those per the instructions. I then mount the axe (part G59) and wire cutters (part K6) to the left fender area and place a spare fire extinguisher in their place on the engine deck. I also add a grab handle to the main engine hatch with brass rod. The biggest missing item is the large hydraulic support tube under the left side of the frame rail and its associated plumbing lines mounted on the middle span of the left fender. This large tube is

not visible in the wartime photos, but it is clearly evident on the surviving example. Either a different setup was trialed at some point in time or the Aberdeen vehicle is not from the same batch as the three prototypes pictured in my reference material. Photos seem to indicate additional hydraulic lines on the right fender instead of the tube, but without better reference I can't be positive.

A few more minor details: the Bosch headlight wiring should go into the side of the front hull and not into the glacis plate as shown, and I should not have welded the entire perimeter of the front hull plate (part B14). It unbolts for servicing the transmission because this vehicle lacks the normal Pz IV service hatches normally found here. Welds are only needed on the front corners of the part. Unfortunately I realize this too late to correct the mistake.

Frame, but no crane

The turret-lifting frame, a major feature of this vehicle, is nicely done. However, for some reason the crane dolly and the associated chain hoists are not included in the kit. While they are not present on the Aberdeen vehicle, there is no way for the turret to be properly removed without them. This looks like a pretty serious omission on Dragon's part that I guess we'll have to wait for the aftermarket to fix. My thinking is that the vehicle could operate very

efficiently as a standard SPG with no need to remove the turret in the field. Nevertheless, I want to be as accurate as possible, so I go ahead and build the crane frame and mount it.

The frame assembly is straightforward, and the only thing worth mentioning is the mounting points to the hull. Dragon's approach is somewhat oversimplified and doesn't appear to be well thought out. To make for easier painting I leave mine off until the model is finished. It requires a little patience when gluing to get it to sit level. I should also mention that the kit does not give you the option of portraying the frame in a raised position. I'm not inspired enough to make the modifications that would be necessary to do so, so I just affix it in the lowered position.

Painting

I plan from the start to paint this model in combat colors very similar to other SPGs seen running around in Normandy with the 21st Panzer Division. I envision a base coat of very pale Dunkelgelb with bold vertical stripes of Olivegrün and Rotbraun (dark yellow, olive green and red brown respectively). The markings will be standard crosses with a unit number on each turret side and tactical markings on the front and rear of the vehicle.

I first mask off the large hole in the center of the hull to protect the interior. I also spend a fair



7. Because this vehicle has an open top, it is necessary to pre-paint the interior before sealing it up. You do have some choices, but the final coat of paint should be Dunkelgelb if you want to represent a working prototype or production vehicle, as I do. You can also leave it in exposed primer red, as it appears in this photo. However, because there is no engine or driver's compartment included in the kit (which is a shame, especially compared to Dragon's 38t series of kits) you will need to reduce their large

vacancy by painting each area black. Spray the area with Tamiya NATO Black, which also acts as a pre-shade coat for the red primer. For that, I take a suggestion from an online forum and use Vallejo Model Color Cavalry Brown. The color is good straight out of the bottle, which saves a lot of time. Note that the shade varies depending on its opacity over the black. The brighter red color on the floor results from spraying extra coats to make the paint more opaque, and is close to the actual color from the bottle. This particular color is very pleasing and I highly recommend it.

8

8. Once the red primer coat is finished, I decide to use the hair spray technique and depict some heavy wear and tear to make it look like the vehicle actually saw some action. I give all the interior components a proper hairspray layer, and once dry I spray the Dunkelgelb on top. I am careful to leave some of the edges less opaque than others to give me a good place to start the chipping. As I've discussed in a few previous articles now, I use water and some stiff brushes to expose the red primer and pay close attention to the scale of the marks. To make it look like the crew caused them, I focus on areas of high wear like the floor, sharp corners, edges of the turret, ammo bins and the gun assembly.

amount of time properly masking the turret interior. A primer coat of Mr. Surfacer 1200 follows the masking. At this point, I also plan out my chipping steps. Like I did on the interior, I spray all the edges, joints and panel lines with Vallejo Cavalry Brown and then cover that with hairspray. For the base coat, I use a 60-40 mix of Tamiya Deck Tan and Dark Yellow, thinned 50 percent with lacquer thinner. This is a lighter shade than the interior color I used earlier. For the green, I use a 70-30 mix of XF-67 NATO Green and XF-5 Flat Green, thinned around 70 percent to allow for fine edged freehand camo spraying. I finish the paint job with a red brown mixture of 80-20 XF-64 Red Brown and XF-7 Flat Red, also thinned 70 percent.

I spray the road wheels, drive sprockets, idlers, crane frame members and trailer wheels with Vallejo Cavalry Brown, followed by a light coat of hairspray in preparation for chipping. For a unique look, I spray only the exposed surfaces in the same lightened dark yellow mixture, leaving the hidden areas in red primer. I treat the road wheels a little differently: after spraying the red primer, I mask off the inner faces and then spray them with Tamiya NATO Black to simulate rubber. I follow this up with circle template masks for the wheel centers. I also give the rear faces another coat of red primer and the fronts

a coat of dark yellow. I use this method because I don't want to cover the chassis in heavy pigments. The visible "hidden" areas of red primer add a lot of visual interest to the subject, which is in keeping with my idea of a hypothesized production version.

No future for you!

With the bulk of the model painted, I can now add the markings. In a rare change of pace for me, I decide to use decals. Most of my armor projects involve spray masks, but this time I'm not in the mood to mask three crosses and two number sets in black and white. Fortunately, I have some appropriate Techmod Decals in my stash. Now I might be the only guy not doing this these days, but I don't bother with a coat of Future Floor Wax or gloss varnish prior to decal application. I just hit the areas with a quick rub of my t-shirt to bring up the sheen levels, then attack the decals with Gunze's wonderful Mr. Mark Softer decal solution. Works like a charm! And no silvering or harm to the decals occurred in any way—they all snuggle down like a good decal should. I apply a few thin layers of Lifecolor Satin varnish once I'm happy with how things look, and the result is that the decals look as if they are painted on. My

only real gripe with armor decals in general is that they are just too perfect looking, but I can live with that here. The tactical markings are Archer transfers and indicate "SP Light Howitzer Battery."

Paint wear

After all of this red primer, hairspray and camo nonsense, it's time to move on to chipping. I believe all this preparation was time well spent, because now I have the perfect technique built-in to recreate very tiny chips and scratches. It takes only a little water and a short stiff brush to get going. I want very small marks on the surface. My goal is to have them visible only under close scrutiny, not to dominate the finish from any distance. The idea is to add a layer of history to the vehicle and additional interest to the model when viewed in person. The camera tends to work against me here, because the lens picks out every minor defect and amplifies it. To the naked eye, however, the effect is very convincing.

But wait—there's more! I can't call it a day just yet, because not all of the chips would have stopped at the red primer level. Some invariably went all the way down to bare metal, so I don my 10x OptiVISOR, close in with a fine new #1 round brush and add a dark gray-brown steel color to the center of the larger chips. And I'm still not finished. This model happens to be particularly sponge-worthy, and I want to take advantage of the layered paint colors. I take a small piece of fine sponge and add some more delicate chips and scratches in yellow, but only on areas



of green and red brown camo to show marks down to the base coat. To be completely thorough, I go back over the larger of those marks with red primer and steel to show various levels of damage. All of this work is undertaken with surgical precision. If I can easily see the marks without the aid of the OptiVISOR, then they are probably too large (although one or two larger ones are usually okay).

This is one of the best ways to properly gauge chip and scratch sizes. I know this is always a hot topic on the "arm-chair-general-even-though-I-never-paint-a-model.com" websites, so finding a solution that makes everyone happy can be a challenge. But I like to think that this comes close.

Tracks

Gee, I almost forgot about them. Well, truth be told, they take up a few nights of work. No easy way around it, Magic Tracks are like that. First, they need proper assembly; second, they need proper paint and weathering. I have to force myself not to slip on a Friulmodel set. Keeping in mind that the right bag means right hand tracks, I sit down for the tedious affair to follow. Assembly is actually fairly straightforward for link-and-link tracks once the ejector marks are scrapped off. To facilitate construction, I lay down a 1/8" wide strip of double-stick tape to my work top. Then, using a straight ruler as a guide, I assemble one side without glue. This is almost exactly 12" long. Once it's assembled, I add a drop of Tamiya Extra-Thin Cement between each link, let it dry for about 10 minutes, and then carefully pry the track run off the tape. The glue has set long enough to allow for handling, so I carefully drape the run over the upper return rollers, paying attention to the direction of the tracks (Pz III/IV tracks are notoriously easy to mess up). From there, it's just a matter of wrapping the length around the sprocket and idler wheels while adding a light sag between each return roller—not too much mind you, but just enough to give it "that" look. I tape the last joint together so the glue can set up properly, and once dry, remove the entire run as a single unit (the loose drive sprocket and idler make this possible). I repeat the entire assembly process for the other side afterwards.

Now I have two whole track runs, pre-formed and ready to paint. First, I apply a primer coat and



9 through 11. To further weather the interior I use Winsor & Newton raw umber oil paint to apply small spots directly to the surface where the greasy and oily hands of the crew would get things dirty. To blend it in I use a small nearly dry brush to work the oil paint into the surface. This effect is visible around the lower edge of the turret structure in photo 8. I follow this process with a liberal pin wash into all of the corners, panel lines and molded details using Mig's Dark Wash. As the pin wash dries, I blend some of the vertical areas downward to create streaks and stains. The last steps include a healthy dose of dust colored pigments, more stains from washes and an application of graphite to raw metal edges. In photos 9 and 10, you can barely see the hand-painted brass rounds, each of which gets its own wash. **12.** Once the interior is finished I close up the hull plates and add new welds with Mr. Dissolved Putty. I make a mistake on the front plate, which is actually removable to facilitate servicing the transmission.



13

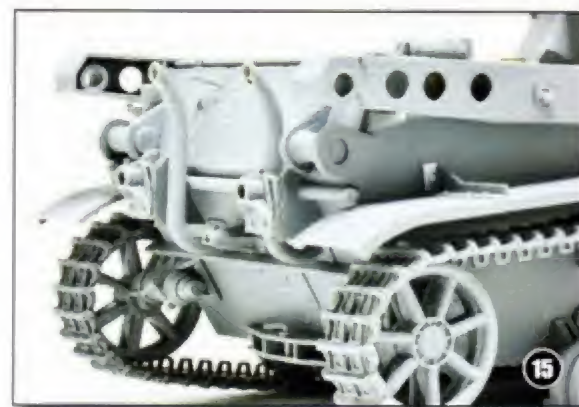
13 and 14. Finally the interior is complete and I can finish the construction. The fenders fit great, but unfortunately the jack is a bit out of scale and doesn't fit with the mounted hoist frame. I have to take some liberties and flip it around. The tool layout is partly based on the prototype and partly based on the Panzer IV. Because of the large empty driver's compartment, I decide to keep the front hatches and visors closed. Track assembly is made easier by keeping both the drive sprockets and idlers loose. This way, I can glue the entire track run together and then remove it as a whole, which gives me full access to the road wheels and suspension units for painting.



14

15. This rear view shows the fitting of the frame support beams, which are very nicely molded. Note the trailer wheel mounts fitted behind the exhaust pipes. **16.** The primer stage with all subassemblies thoroughly coated with Mr. Surfac

1200. Proper masking is a must in this case to protect the previously painted interior, and note the track runs assembled as one unit. This makes painting and weathering them much easier than if they were glued onto the model. **17 and 18.** I spray the same Vallejo Cavalry Brown red primer paint to all edges for future chipping purposes. I will apply a hairspray layer before I begin the exterior paint job.



15



16

then a base coat of dark gray-brown steel. Next, I prep three heavily thinned mixtures of Lifecolor acrylics. One is a medium rust brown color, the second is a lighter version of this, and the third is a light mud brown color. All are thinned about 70 percent with water, to a consistency a little thicker than a wash. I dip a small sponge into the first color and randomly dab it over the tracks, then follow this with the light rust color, and finally the mud brown color. Neatness is not my goal here—I am moving quickly and randomly letting the colors mix as I go. The idea is to add a thin layer of rust/dirt coloring to the tracks. I want a patchy appearance, hence the use of the sponge. Once all of this dries, I add pigments for a light dust buildup in the deeper recesses, which I set in place with Tamiya X-20A Acrylic Thinner. I follow this with a brushing of rust paint for the guide teeth only, and then go over the upper part of the guide teeth with graphite to show fresh

bare metal. On the inner link faces, I carefully brush a dark wash down the path of the road wheels to add contrast and remove the light coloring that has now built up between each link. I wrap up the finish by using a pencil to add graphite to the outer cleat faces, again to show fresh wear. Whew! Quite a workout doing all of that twice, but the finished tracks look great.

Weathering

Back to the model: it is nearly complete with all of the paint, chips and scratches applied. To protect the paint I give the upper areas a few thin layers of satin varnish, then add some washes to make the vehicle look properly used. First up is a pin wash applied directly to every detail, which is made from a blend of Mig P220 Dark and P222 Neutral Washes. I dry this and blend out any excess, which also removes any tidemarks. Next, the engine deck and



17



18



19. I spray the base coat mix of Tamiya Dark Yellow and Deck Tan to all the exposed surfaces, but am careful to not spray any hidden areas so the red primer can still be seen. I use this idea as a guide throughout the painting process. **20** and **21.** For the camo, I use Green first and follow that up with Red Brown. Mask off under the fenders to keep from getting overspray on the lower hull area. **22.** For markings I choose everyone's favorite: decals. Techmod provides bonus decals in the many Kagero reference books, so I finally have a chance to put them to good use. Mr. Mark

Softer gives them a painted-on look. Note that I have started the chipping process to show a mix of exposed red primer and steel. **23** and **24.** This kit is loaded with wheels and I want to expose the red primer on all of them. So, I paint all the surfaces that need red primer and then mask off the inner faces of the road wheels with 2mm tape. I spray Tamiya NATO Black for the rubber, use a circle template to re-spray the red, add a layer of hairspray over that and finally spray the Dunkelgelb. Then comes some more chipping fun. Whew...

all major joints and bolt heads are hit with straight Dark Wash. I again blend out any excess wash, and also begin to add streaks and runs from bolts mounted on vertical surfaces. The entire pin wash process is very controlled and intentional and can be quite time-consuming, but I prefer this to the option of a general wash and/or post-shading. Besides, a general wash will more than likely tint the finish, which is not a look I like. To avoid that I use just a single filter mixture of Mig P405 Brown for White-Green and P401 Ochre for Gray Sand, which gives the three-tone camo some unification and adds slightly

more depth to the yellow areas. I do not want to lose the paint's light coloring, so I leave it at that. The engine deck hatches get a few more filter layers to gently break up the coloring back there, but after that I can put the filters away. The rest of the paint fading will be accomplished with oils.

The lower hull sides are now ready for some dust, and first on the list is to add a thin layer of light colored pigments. I follow this step with some dark washes around the suspension units, including some various stains and streaks. I glue on the road wheels and finish them with pigments and pin washes. Next,

I add the tracks along with the sprockets and idler wheels, which pretty much finishes off that area.

I go over the rest of the model with various layers of oil paints and pigments. To get a detailed explanation of these techniques, check out the Painting Guide installments.

Dragon, are you really listening?

Overall, this is a cool subject and a fun kit. I truly enjoyed this model, but—and this is a big “but”—there are some major components missing from the kit. Unfortunately that's nothing new. The ongoing



25 and 26. For the weathering I aim for the "summer look"—no heavy mud on this one. I only use a light dusting of pigments and a few pin washes to bring out the detail. The dried mud on the rubber tires is a mix Mig's Abteilung 502 Basic Earth and Buff oil paints. This yields a finer result than you can get with pigments. Even though I've been chipping the model at every stage of the painting with the help of the hairspray layers, I consistently pay close attention to the scale of the marks so that the chips are only visible under close inspection. The hairspray technique gives a nice realistic look to the paint job.



27. To continue with the chipping process, I apply subtle layers of light sand with a sponge. Afterwards, I go back over each mark with a very fine brush and some dark gray-brown paint to represent the exposed metal. I am very careful to leave some of the light sand paint showing to give each mark a 3D look. The result of all of this effort is realistically layered chips from the combination of the hairspray process with the sponge application, which is effective over the camo colors. **28.** I paint the exhaust pipes with the Lifecolor Rust set, and carefully hand paint each tool. **29.** The next step, which really starts to bring the model to life, is the pin wash. I prefer to use a dark gray-



brown wash mixture and apply it only to specific areas, since the capillary action allows it to follow the molded details. **30.** I next apply a filter layer to the entire model using a combination of Mig's P405 Brown and P401 Ochre filters. This is a good way to get a toned down filter color. Sometimes a single color won't work so I mix them just as I would any paint color. **31.** This shot shows the results of the effort I take with the painting. Leaving the hoist frame and wheels in solid Dunkelgelb with exposed red primer is a way to add contrast without much effort. I will focus on the tracks next, and then I can assemble the components before I finish the final weathering processes.



32. The pigment application is quick and simple. I mix some lighter dust colors together and apply them to the model dry (the model is placed on its side for this step), then set them with some thinner. I run a few stains over this for some more visual interest and follow that with dark pin washes and stains around the suspension units. The final stains are made with the Mig's new Wet Effects and Damp Earth product, and its results can be seen around the edges of each bogie mount. Applying this on top of the pigments creates a unique look that I really like.



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36. I paint the tracks in a dark mixture of gray and brown Lifecolor acrylics, one of my standard home brews. **37.** The next step is a lot more involved and it really gives the tracks their true color. I pick three light rust and dirt paint colors, thin them

down about 60-70 percent, and randomly apply each color with a sponge. It's almost like applying a wash, but the paint is not quite as thin. **38.** I finish the tracks with pigments and dark rust washes, followed by graphite.



34



35

33 and 34. The drive sprockets show the effect of chipping with the hair spray technique, plus graphite to simulate exposed metal. I apply pigments to all of the wheel centers. The rubber tire sections get some additional oil paint washes to show fine dirt and dried mud. For the grease stains on the center wheel caps, I apply a dark pin wash. **35.** I modify the rear deck tool layout by adding the fire extinguisher and moving the axe to the left fender. I paint each tool with light browns and dark grays, and add dark washes to give them a slightly used look—nothing too fancy here.



38

A Stoodie for Stalin



Spud builds the long awaited plastic kit of the Allies' iconic workhorse

Do you really want to know that this kit comes in a sturdy cardboard box? Or that the five light gray sprues are all separately bagged and the tires are supplied in soft black vinyl? Or that the instructions are fairly easy to follow but the illustrations are on the small side? Or that the kit includes decal options for three Soviet, one Polish, one Czech and one 8th Air Force vehicle stationed in England 1944? I didn't think so. Let's waste no more time and get to the actual assembly.

Getting started

In this ICM kit, like just about any model truck, assembly starts with the chassis, drive train and engine. The fact that the chassis components are all separate means that this is the most complex part of the entire assembly. Everything goes together with no real fuss, apart from the H-shaped sub assembly

(part 11). This needs to be trimmed to fit correctly between the main chassis rails. When studying the instructions the drive train looks to be a complete nightmare to assemble, but thankfully ICM has molded all the drive shafts and axles as one part—but having said that, there are still about 30 more to be fitted before this assembly can be called complete!

The axles all require some filler, as does the joint between parts A72 and A73. While adding the leaf springs I find it best to dry fit the parts before gluing. Take care when removing the torque arms (part A80) from the sprue because they are just begging to be snapped in two. While test fitting the replacement wheels from Masters Productions, I find that the rear axle shafts need to be trimmed before the new wheels will fit properly.

To really show off this complex assembly, you should probably display the truck upside down in a

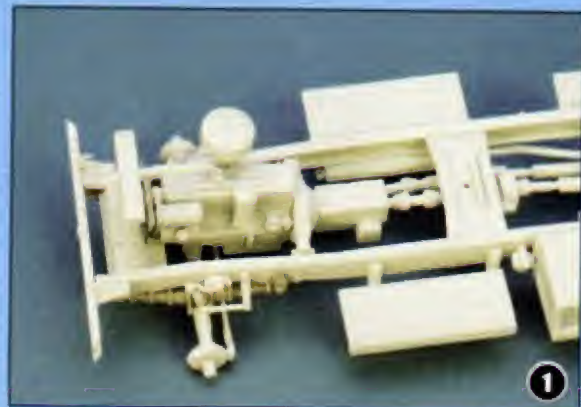
display case—a dramatic—otherwise all this hard work will go to waste on the finished model!

Hercules power

The engine and radiator assemblies are straightforward. These 21 parts build into a decent replica of the 6-cylinder Hercules JXD engine. Super-detailers could go to town, using our very own Allied-Axis issue 21, which offers some great engine compartment reference on the US6. But because I plan to affix the hood in the closed position, I leave the engine as is. I can now install the engine, fuel tank, spare wheel and front and rear fenders to the chassis before mating the chassis with the drive train assembly.

Cargo body

The cargo body comprises a large, single-piece floor section, two side sections, the front bulkhead and a moveable tailgate. But since I'm using the



1 through 3. The complex chassis goes together well, but some filling is required on the axle parts. The engine



is nicely detailed out of the box, but if you leave the hood open it will be crying out for some extra detailing.



4. I swap the kit wheels and hubs for the better-detailed resin replacements from French manufacturer Masters Productions. **5.** The resin canvas roof section from Masters is beautifully detailed on the outside, but lacks any detailing on the interior surfaces. Luckily this is hardly noticeable once the part is in place. **6.** With the cab sections and fenders in place the engine compartment starts to look nice and busy. Some filler is required along the fender joint. **7.** The hood in this kit has a small but noticeable sink mark, which I fill and sand flush before priming. **8.** The dashboard and engine grille are detailed using the excellent Archer Transfer set. This small set includes not only all the instrument dials and information placards, but also some

cool embossed decals for the grille-mounted Studebaker logo. **9.** The truck is now just about ready for a coat of primer. Note that some filler is required along the bottom edge of the cargo body sides. **10.** I paint the foot wells of the cab to represent a heavily worn look with both the red primer and bare metal showing through. The realistic metallic color is Chain Mail from Games Workshop's line of acrylic paints. Mig pigments complete the grubby finish. **11.** Once the model is primed with Mr. Surfacer 1200 and checked for any blemishes, the model receives a base coat of Tamiya TS-5 Olive Drab. These paints spray extremely well and offer a quick and simple way to get the base color in place.

Masters Productions canvas cover I only need the floor section and tailgate. The other panels are all molded as part of the replacement canvas awning.

The kit benches need to be glued to the inside of the awning before fitting this part to the floor. At this point I do have to sand both the inside of the awning and the ends of the benches to get a good fit. I suggest trimming the front ends of the benches because they are all but invisible once the awning is fixed to the floor. While I'm fitting the new resin part to the floor, it becomes obvious that some filling will be required for a perfect joint (check out the accompanying photos and you'll see what I mean).

The addition of the smaller underside fixtures finishes off the cargo body. I also carefully carve off the little resin "blobs" on the Masters parts that are supposed to depict the canvas securing hooks on the side panels. I replace these by drilling small holes

and inserting tiny sections of bent brass wire. For the ropes themselves I use fine twine. This is fiddly work but their omission would really be noticeable.

What a tool

While trawling through my reference material, I notice that the ICM kit doesn't include any form of pioneer tool rack. Now I'm no expert but I'm sure pretty much every U.S. WW2 military vehicle came with some tools or the standardized rack. Thankfully I can make use of the vast warehouse of spares that the Chief Squirrel Stansell has stored away for a rainy day. If you've seen the warehouse where the Ark of the Covenant is stored in the Indiana Jones movies, then you'll know what I'm talking about!

Cabin fever

ICM did a great job on the cab. All the hand con-

trol levers and foot pedals are included as separate items, and they even include the window winders and interior and exterior handles for the doors, although these are a little too delicate for my liking. I fashion new parts from thin brass wire for extra durability. The only thing that could be better is the seat, which doesn't display any texture whatsoever. But after a quick attack with a mini drill fitted with a round-headed dental burr and an application of some thinned Squadron putty, I have a seat that looks as if someone had actually plunked their arse on it instead of one fresh from the Studebaker showroom in downtown Moscow.

With the basic cab in place, it's time to fit the fenders to the sides of the engine compartment. The fit is a bit of a disappointment and I have to break out the filler again to correct it.



12

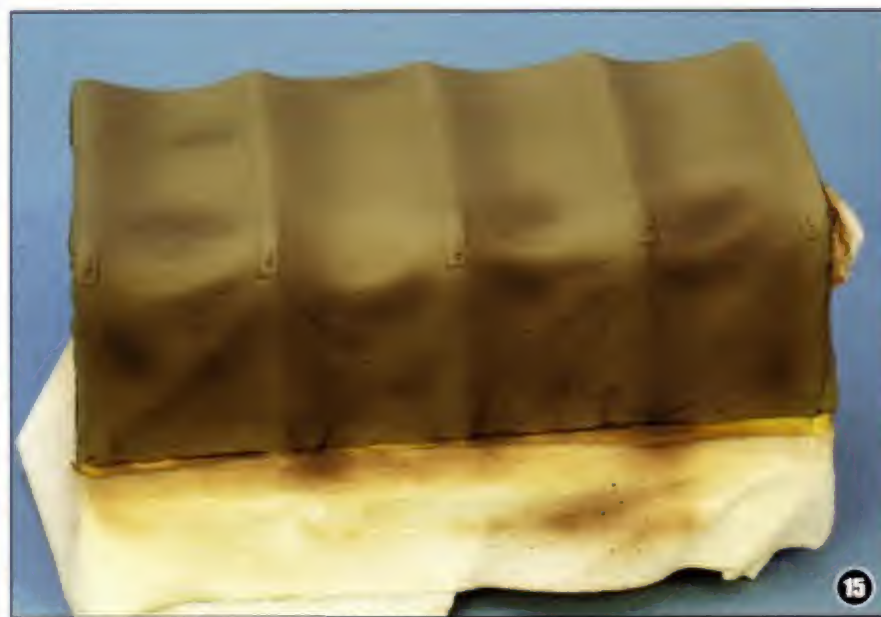


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12. The next step is to apply Humbrol Maskol along the edges of the doors. Once dry, I mist Lifecolor Khakibraun mixed with a drop of Rust Base Color over the cab and body sides to simulate a faded OD finish. **13.** Here the Maskol has been removed to reveal a stark contrast between the Tamiya base coat and the Lifecolor Khakibraun. **14** and **15.** I give the tarp a base coat with Tamiya Khaki Drab, then add shadows and shading with a mixture of the base color plus Flat Black and Hull Red. For the highlights, I airbrush on Khaki and then Khaki mixed with a small amount of Deck Tan. **16.** At this stage the fading and shading effects have way too much contrast, but once the washes and weathering pigments are in place it will be far more subtle. This is a good example of just how much filters, washes and pigments tone down even the most vivid painting effects.



14



15

bright silver, fit the clear lenses and mask them with Humbrol Maskol, then fix the headlights in place on the front fenders. I can now install and mask off the glazing, making sure no paint can sneak inside the cab and spoil the clear parts from behind. I learned this from bitter experience, but don't worry—it was only an airplane!

Final fittings

I can't completely assemble the model until after I paint the interior of the cab, and as usual I end up spending more time than I really need to since very little will remain visible on the finished model. Well, a little more painting practice can't hurt, right?

Once the interior is painted I can add the cab's rear window and the roof section. I'm pleased with how well this section fits—it needs only a very light sanding along the rear edge of the roof for a perfect fit.

Lastly, I paint the insides of the headlights

Painting

The first step of the painting process is to apply a coat of primer, which provides a good surface for the paints to adhere to and also highlights any blemishes I may have missed during assembly. For this I use the excellent Gunze Sangyo Mr. Surfacer 1200 aerosol spray. This sticks really well and dries to a nice tight finish that doesn't obliterate any of the kit's details. Once the primer is completely dry, I give the Studie its base color. I use the Tamiya TS5 Olive Drab spray can. I love these paints because

they are a quick and convenient way to base coat a model, and just like the Mr. Surfacer products they dry to a superb finish. I have been a real fan of these paints for a while but for some reason they are no longer sold in the UK. Luckily I'm now working at Ampersand Towers in the good old U.S. of A., so I have been making full use of them. I thoroughly recommend them.

Now that the Studie has a nice solid and a slightly shiny base coat, it's time to bring the paint finish to life. This first involves painting Humbrol Maskol along the edges of the doors and around the doorframes. Next, I mix up Lifecolor UA212 Khakibraun with a tiny drop of UA702 Rust Base Color to warm it up. I mist this mixture over the cab and the sides



16



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and rear of the cargo body, but not on the canvas sections. While applying it I mask off the hood for a cheeky bit of modulation, which adds some more visual interest to the monotone olive drab.

Gloss me, baby

It's now time to give the truck (minus the canvas tilt) a couple light coats of Future Wax to prepare it for the kit decals. These are, to be honest, the worst decals I have ever used! As I soak them in water to release the backing they completely disintegrate. The large white circle, which goes on the tailgate is the only one that stays intact long enough to actually place onto the model—but as soon as I try to position it, it too falls apart!

In the end I resort to the stash of decals that Pat stores in a nearby tree along with his nuts for winter hibernation. With these I manage to cobble together some generic Soviet markings.

Matte me, baby

With the decals in place I can give the model a second coat of Future to seal them in before applying the matt coat and the filters and washes, which can easily destroy the delicate decals. A coat of the excellent Vallejo 059 Matte Varnish from their Model Air line—which is pre-thinned, can be sprayed straight from the bottle and dries to an ultra-flat finish—comes next. And not it's time for the fun part ...

Weathering

With the basic painting now brought to life, it's



17. I am not exaggerating when I say that the ICM decals are complete rubbish. All of them break up either while being soaked in water to remove the backing sheet or while being placed on the model, as you can see here.

18 and 19. To finish the weathering, I mask off the windshield and carefully airbrush it with Vallejo Matte Varnish, mixed with a small drop of German Camo Pale Brown and Light Mud. This yields a very close match to the pigment colors used to weather the rest of the truck.

now in time to bring the whole model to life. Weathering is a crucial step in telling the story of the vehicle, and to me it's just as important as battle damage and even a diorama setting. The weathering shows the environment and conditions it was used in and the kind of terrain it had to traverse during its time in service.

To start with, I thin some Humbrol Modelcote

Matte Varnish with white spirit, and then liberally wash it over the lower chassis and under the fenders and mudguards. I immediately load a large flat brush with a mixture of Mig pigments and sprinkle them onto the wet varnish by repeatedly tapping the head of the brush. As the pigment soaks into the varnish it dries to leave a very natural and realistic caked-on mud effect.

After the varnish dries, I apply more dry pigments and fix them in place with Mig P249 Pigment Fixer. On the tires I "wash" the fixer/pigment mix and, before it's fully dry, wipe a cloth dampened with white spirit on the tread portions of the tires. This leaves the pigment in the recessed portions only, which makes it look as though the truck has been off-road but that its most recent movement has been on metaled roads.

Final weathering

To finish up, I mix some pigments with more white spirits and some buff colored oil paint. I then flick this on the sides and rear of the truck with an old stubby bristled brush to simulate mud that splashed up from puddles while the Studie made its way west to victory in Berlin. The truck won't be complete if I don't add some of my favorite product, Mig P410 Oil and Grease Stain Mixture, around the filler cap of the fuel tank. This soaks into the pigment to create those characteristic damp looking stains!

Windshield

To simulate the windshield wiper arcs, I first



20. As mentioned in the main text, the tailgate mounted tool rack isn't included in the kit and had to be sourced from the spares box. Loading a stiff bristled brush with Mig pigments diluted with white spirit and then flicking the end of the brush with my



finger creates the mud splashes. **21.** The red star and the white painted width indicator sections add a much needed splash of color to an otherwise very drab vehicle.



measure and cut out some masking tape segments. I place these on the screens before masking off the surrounds. For the film of road dirt covering the rest of the screen, I mix up a combination of Vallejo Matte Varnish with a small drop of 825 German Camo Pale Brown and 70315 Light Mud (from the Panzer Aces line). This gives me a very close match to the pigment colors used to weather the rest of the truck. I mist this color on with my Iwata HP-C Plus airbrush and, once dry, I then remove the tape to reveal two clean arcs. To finish it off, I add some muddy runs using a fine pointed brush to the corners of the arcs.

Conclusion

The ICM Studebaker was, to be honest, not at the top of my list of modeling projects to complete, but the addition of the Masters wheels and canvas tilt for the cargo body transformed this plain old truck kit into a project I have really enjoyed. In fact, I'm now inspired to build some more truck-based models. Overall the kit goes together well and the instructions are fairly clear (albeit a little on the small side). Detail is pretty good, although not quite up to the standard of the Asian manufacturers. The only drawbacks of the entire kit are the decal sheet, which as I mentioned is complete rubbish, and the absence of any pioneer tool rack. This aside, I can thoroughly recommend this ICM kit and the Master Productions wheels and Canvas that I added.

—Spud Murphy



MMiR RECCE

ICM Studebaker US6 WWII Army Truck. Kit number 35511. Suggested retail price \$52.95.

Masters Productions Wheels for ICM Truck Studebaker US6. Set number MP35053. Suggested retail price £13.00.

Masters Productions Canvas for ICM Truck Studebaker US6. Set number MP35054. Suggested retail price £21.60. Set graciously provided by the manufacturer.

Archer Transfers Studebaker US6 Instruments, Placards and Grille Logo. Set number AR35280. Suggested retail price \$5.95. Set graciously provided by the manufacturer.

References

Allied-Axis: The Photo Journal of the Second World War, Issue 21. "Studebaker and Reo US6 Trucks" by David Doyle. Ampersand, 2008. Suggested retail price \$15.95.

The New U.S. Army Workhorse



The M1078A1 is the 2.5-ton 4x4 LMTV standard cargo version of the FMTV, designed to transport supplies and soldiers. Depending on mission requirements, it can be fitted with a troop seat kit, a canvas cover for the cargo compartment, or even materiel handling equipment. This vehicle belongs to the motor pool of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

The Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV) has its origin in a 1983 U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command requirement document calling for a Medium Tactical Truck (MTT) to replace the aging Vietnam-era M35/M44 Series 2.5-ton 6x6 trucks. The MTT requirement was quickly quashed on technical grounds, however, and in October 1984 the U.S. Army issued a revised requirement catalogue for a new generation of tactical trucks: the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles. These were to replace the old, maintenance-intensive fleets of 2.5-ton M35/M44 Series, 5-ton M54 Series, 5-ton M809 Series and 5-ton M939 Series trucks. In January 1996, after intensive trials with several prototypes, the first FMTVs were fielded to the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In addition, 1,429 trucks were sent to

units in South Korea to replace the aging M35A2s. The remainder were sent to units in Hawaii and the continental United States. At that time, three batches of FMTVs (designated A0, A1 and A1R) were in production, which differed mainly in their engines and suspensions. Currently, the U.S. Army has received nearly 46,000 trucks and trailers out of an 83,000-truck requirement issued at the beginning of the program. The FMTV design has never remained static. To further increase reliability, Operational Readiness rates and ease of use, there have been several upgrades throughout the production run. In the interest of fleet commonality and interoperability, the vast majority of these upgrades can be retrofitted if



necessary. As a result, current FMTV trucks look much like ones from 1996, but all that actually remains of the original design are a small number of pressed steel panels that are still sourced from Steyr in Austria. Today, with the exception

of the proprietary driveline assemblies such as engine, automatic transmission and axles, fabricated parts are now manufactured on-site by BAE Systems. I am primarily focused on the M1078A1 2.5-ton 4x4 LMTV, recently released by Trumpeter. For more information see *FMTV Trucks in Detail* by Ralph Zwilling. Wings & Wheels Publications, 2009, ISBN 978-80-9641675-5. Suggested retail price \$49.95.

—Ralph Zwilling, Tank-Masters.de

If necessary, a soft canvas cover kit can be installed over the entire cargo bed. The tubes and steel poles of this kit are stored on the front of the cargo bed. This vehicle features a very cleanly applied NATO camouflage pattern.



The multi-release pintle hook between the two tow shackles is used for towing trailers like the M1082 LMTV Trailer. The rear mud flaps are raised for off-road driving.





Left: The intake air cleaner assembly located behind the cab is a cartridge-type filter that removes particles from the air before it enters the turbocharger. In front of this assembly is the radiator overflow tank, which holds over two gallons of engine coolant. The spare tire retainer is located behind the cab. The retainer is controlled by a hydraulic mechanism on the passenger side of the vehicle. Right: An electrodeposition primer process is used to rustproof all steel parts prior to a topcoat of Chemical Agent Resistant Coating (CARC) and camouflage application. Additionally, all cab panels are galvanized on both sides and all floor and side panels receive a polyurethane coating up to window height before application of the CARC.



The battery box, containing four 12-volt batteries, is located on the left side below the cargo bed. Note the mounting of the brake system's air tanks.



A detail shot of the rear of the M1078A1 LMTV. Note the two rear tow eyes/shackles, two electrical connectors and a tow pintle. Note also the four reflection panels.



Today, all FMTVs are fielded with Michelin 395/85 R20 XZL tires mounted on Titan 20 by 10 two-piece bolt-together rims. Eaton's Central Tire Inflation System allows the driver to adjust tire pressure with the touch of a button to adapt to changing terrain conditions.

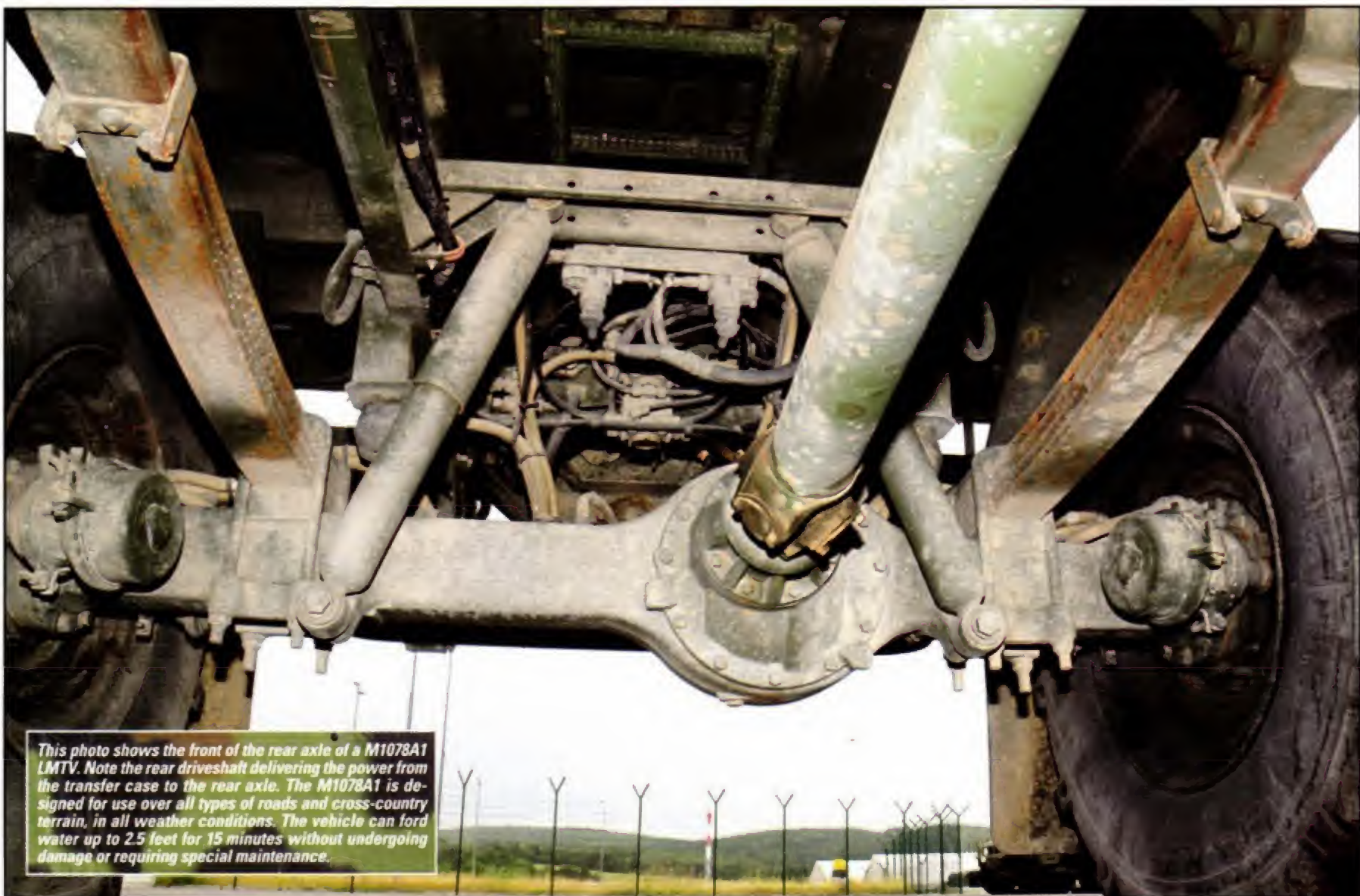


Here and below. The front axle assembly of the M1078A1 LMTV weighs approximately 1,580 lbs. Note the parabolic-tapered leaf springs that connect the front hydraulic shock absorbers, the pivot arms and the steering knuckle mechanism.





The M1078A1 2.5-ton Cargo LMTV has a 275 hp engine. The 1998 EPA emission compliant engine for the FMTV A1 models, the Caterpillar 3126 ATAAC, has the same power and torque curves as the current C7 engine used in the new FMTV A1R models.



This photo shows the front of the rear axle of a M1078A1 LMTV. Note the rear driveshaft delivering the power from the transfer case to the rear axle. The M1078A1 is designed for use over all types of roads and cross-country terrain, in all weather conditions. The vehicle can ford water up to 2.5 feet for 15 minutes without undergoing damage or requiring special maintenance.



The steering column controls mounted to the left of and below the steering wheel, include the horn, turn signal, headlight dimmer controls and controls for the windshield wiper and washer. The angle and height of the steering wheel are adjustable.



In the middle of the cab, directly beneath the windshield, are the personnel heater, air system controls, Central Tire Inflation System electronic control unit and the inclinometer.

This photo shows the two passengers seats of a M1078A1 LMTV. The storage box behind the seat is spacious enough to hold a M42 Chemical Agent Alarm Unit if required.



This M1078A1 of the 497th MTC (Light/Medium Truck) from Fort Lewis, Washington, was seen on a Main Supply Route near Logistics Support Area Anaconda in May 2004. The vehicle has a field-improvised Level III armored cab.



Bandai Sci-Fi



New armor from Bandai
in the form of a twin-barreled
1:35th scale Semovente

The Japanese have loved giant robots for years. Remember those Shogun toys back in the 70's with wheels on their feet and the shooting projectiles that your mom was always trying to keep you from swallowing? Well, Bandai is the world's biggest toy company and they rake in a lot of yen with their Mobile Suit Gundam kits that are based around that giant warrior robot theme. There is also a cartoon series based around this subject, which leads to a true question for the ages: what came first, the show or the models?

In the last few years, Bandai has been putting out a small lineup of Gundam-based vehicle and figure sets in 1:35 scale. Usually I don't go for the whole human-in-a-robot-suit thing, but when I saw the EFGF M61A5 Main Battle Tank in Model Graphix about a year ago, it definitely got my attention—now this was something I could totally dork out on. I begged Pat to get a copy from HobbyLink Japan and, wonder of wonders, my abject pleading worked.

Building this sucker

This kit is impressive from the moment you open the box. The text on the instructions is

entirely in Japanese since the kit is designed almost exclusively for Bandai's home market. Don't worry though—this won't slow you down during construction because the diagrams are clear and free of errors. There is a foldout section at the front of the booklet with full color photos and color chips to use as a guide for painting. One of the coolest things about this kit is the use of different colored plastic. The figure sprues even include multiple colors on a single sprue, something I've never seen before.

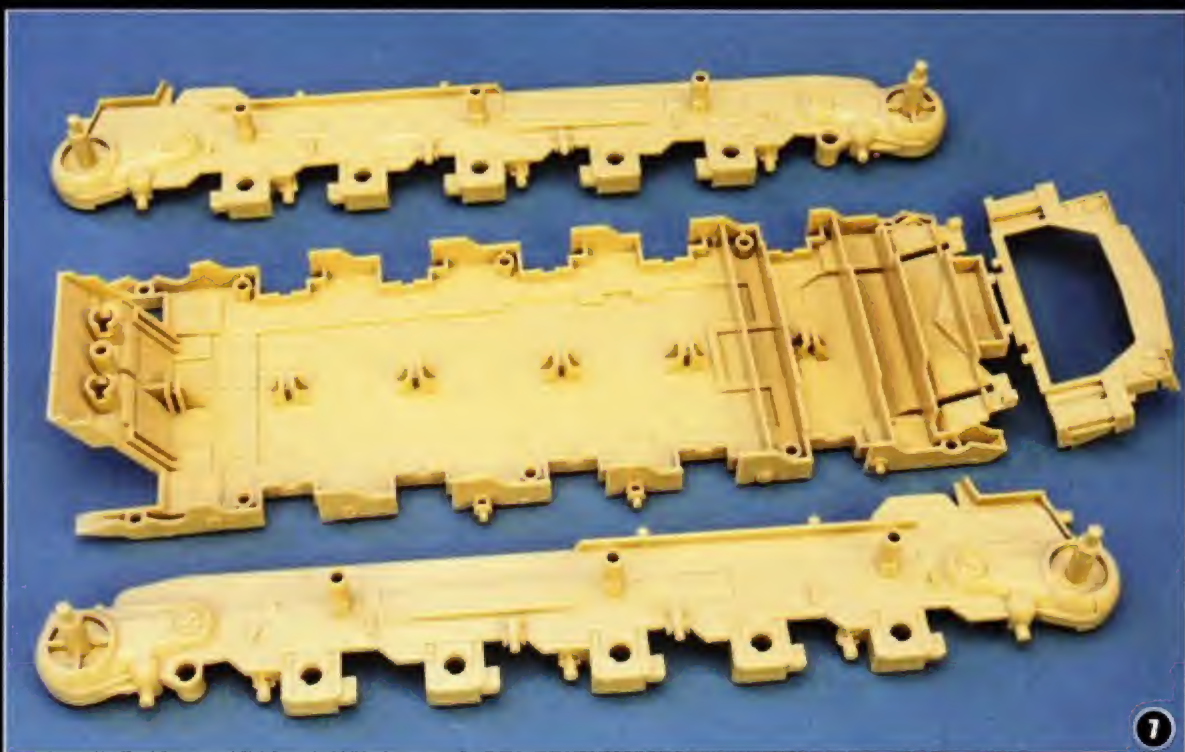
A load of nice detail parts are included, such as a photo-etch fret, clear parts, poly caps and metal pins to connect the sections of vinyl track. Overall, the model seems to be designed with ease of construction in mind. For big parts such as the turret and hull halves, there is a peg and socket connecting system that makes these components practically snap together. There are lots of poseable parts, too: the road wheels include poly caps so you can roll your tank across the carpet, the guns elevate, the hatches open and the turret rotates.

Construction

Construction of the model starts off with a multi-part lower hull. The hull side panels

basically plug right into the bottom plate using a peg and socket system that makes fit very true. You only need cement to hold everything in place permanently. There are some small gaps here through which you can see daylight, but they are not evident once the model is complete. I do use a small amount of putty to make the front bumper halves on the bow (L16 and L17) look like one piece. The large rear hull panel in step 2 pops right into place just as easily as the lower hull sides. As for the suspension, that's really easy too, since all of the arms and shock absorbers are keyed to only fit in their correct locations. There are actually two types of poly caps for the road wheels and drive sprockets, one set that allows them to rotate and one set that holds them static. One thing I find out later in construction is that the front drive sprockets will not go on once the upper hull is in place. The front fenders get in the way, so the upper hull had to be popped off again to get the wheels and tracks on properly.

The tracks are vinyl and consist of two lengths per run. The cool thing about this is the included metal connecting pins. This makes for a much stronger connection than the normal, glued-together tracks. In step 9, the instructions tell you



1. The kit includes lots of goodies: clear parts, some photo-etch and multicore sprues for the figures. **2.** Two different sets of poly caps are provided. One set leaves the road wheels and drive sprockets movable and one set makes them static. **3.** The tracks have metal connecting pins that provide a stronger joint than glueable tracks. **4.** The turret top is massive and has lots of detail. **5.** A look at the upper hull in comparison to a DML Sherman upper hull. **6.** Small photo-etch chains for the smoke dischargers are included, something not seen in other plastic kits. **7.** The lower hull is a multi-part affair. Note the pegs and sockets that make construction simple and true. **8.** There is lots of detail to show off on the lower hull and fenders if you opt not to mount the side skirts and storage boxes.

to add the driver's periscopes and the little support stand for the figure, but I hold off until later and am able to wiggle them in place anyway. Like most components in this kit, these parts fit in place snugly without cement. All of the detail parts for the upper hull go on with no problem in steps 10-12. I leave off the clear headlight lenses in step 10 until later. The tools from Step 12 can also be left off if you opt to put on the big storage boxes over the front sponsons like I do. In my opinion, they make the tank look tougher.

The side skirts also go together with no prob-

lems. I try to pose one of the boarding steps (parts L12) down, but this ends up interfering with the chevron decals, so I position them all in the up position. In step 15, you can add the big storage boxes and the side skirts if you want, but this is optional. If I were to build this model again, I would actually attach the skirts to the upper hull before joining the upper and lower hull halves. The reason for this is that you can securely cement them from underneath without running the risk of marring your finished paint job if you try to glue them on last. I wind up having to do some touch-ups here and there. The last detail on

the upper hull is the tow cables. Those of you who do not like nylon string may want to replace them. I put these in place by attaching the rear-towing eye (L15), lacing the cable through the sponson supports, and then attaching the front eye (J30).

From here we move along to that massive turret. This part of the model makes me think of a dreadnought battleship turret with its big twin guns. In step 18, I leave out the commander's chair and the clear periscope ring (K1) until later. The big gun barrels come in separate halves, so there is some seam filling to do here. Steps 20 and 21 deal with the turret basket. There are some



9. The figures come in multi-colored plastic and go together well overall. The separate upper and lower arms are a little fiddly. **10.** A mock-up before paint gives a look at the vehicle without the optional side skirts and storage boxes. The figures give another impression of the overall size of the model. It's big! **11** and **12.** This model is an excellent subject for some advanced finishing techniques: tonal variation with the airbrush, filters, chips and scratches, oil paint streaking and pigments are all used. **13.** The clear headlight lenses get a coat of chrome silver paint on their backsides.



really nice photo-etch grates provided for the rear bustle rack that practically fall into place. I leave the gunner's sight cover (F5) loose and paint the clear sight window (K3) separately. The cover itself snaps into place for painting and is easily removed to insert the clear part later on. The same goes for the CITV type thing behind the commander's cupola. I leave both the clear part (K4) and its cover (H2) separate until the weathering stage. There is another nice touch in step 23: small photo-etch chains for the smoke dischargers. This is really cool, since most companies don't even include these for kits of real vehicles!

To finish things off with assembly, two really nice multi-part machine guns are provided: a heavy MG for the commander and a light MG on the bustle rack. Both of these are very nicely detailed. I especially like the little photo-etch butterfly trigger for the commander's cupola MG.

But wait a minute, folks—there's more! The kit includes three pretty decent figures too.

The main parts for these three gents come on a multi-colored sprue. I think this is really neat,

since I've never seen it on any other 1:35 scale kit. There are some teeny photo-etch dog tags and headset mikes provided. The figures go together easily enough, except for the arms. For each arm, there is an upper and lower half. This is kinda fid-



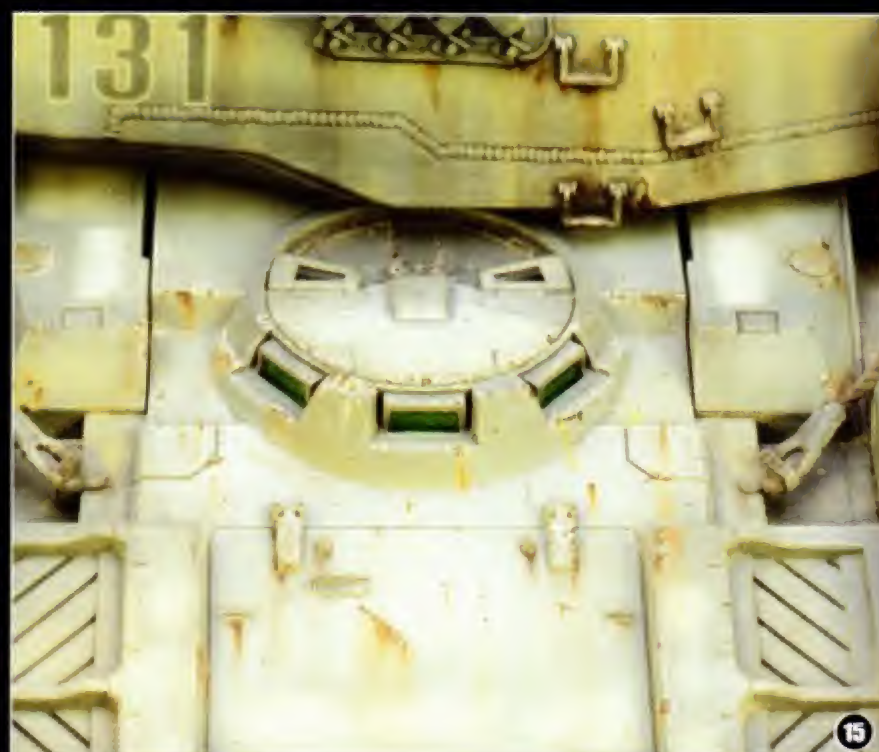
dly, especially for Captain Eye Patch, who is posed to fit in the bustle rack. I do notice some small molding flaws in the main bodies. There are small sunken lines in some of the torso parts caused by

the molding process. I fill them using Mr. Surfacer 500 and then scrape away the excess. I am very slow when it comes to painting up figures, so these are still on my bench at time of writing.

Finish

The instructions cover two finishing options, one gray and one tan, but don't let this limit you. This is a purely fictitious subject, so feel free to go nuts. Although the model looks great on the box top and in the painting instructions finished in tan, I really dig the gray scheme shown on the last page of the instructions.

For painting, I leave the model in the following subassemblies: wheels, hull, turret and side skirts. I prime these components with Mr. Surfacer 1200 and follow that up with a base coat of Tamiya TS-48 Gunship Gray. Next, I give all the upper surfaces an overspray of Tamiya XF-53 Neutral Gray followed by XF-19 Sky Gray with an increasing amount of XF-55 Deck Tan mixed in. The side skirts, upper hull and turret are all given this treatment to lighten up the color and get some



14 and 15. The main crew hatches are poseable open and closed. The clear periscope parts are painted chrome silver on the backside followed by Tamiya Clear Green. Lots of chips, scratches, and metallic wear effects are added in these areas.
16. Painting the upper hull and skirts separately results in a very interesting tonal

variation. The chevron decals settle down well with the boarding steps in the up position. **17.** A close-up of the turret bustle rack details. The boarding ladder is poseable up or down. **18 through 20.** The finished model reminds me of the combination of a dreadnought turret and a Merkava hull.



tonal variation. I also airbrush lots of streaks using a mixture of Deck Tan and Sky Gray. To protect all this hard work, I then spray a coat of Future Floor Wax over the whole shebang.

At this point, I apply all of the decals. These are a little thick, but react well to judicious applications of Microscale Micro Set and Micro Sol. Before moving on to further effects, I get rid of the gloss using Vallejo 71059 Matte Varnish. All of the anti-skid surfaces are then dry brushed with Lukas 0190 Warm Gray mixed with Winsor & Newton 644 Titanium White to make them stand out. I then apply a filter of W&N 465 Payne's Gray to tone everything down a little and blend things together. This is followed by a detail wash with a mixture of Payne's Gray and W&N 331 Ivory Black. I use turpenoid for all of the oil paint effects and washes on this model. It doesn't seem to attack paint and decals like other thinners such as mineral spirits and Model Master paint thinner.

Smaller detail parts such as the machine guns, tracks and clear parts are also left off for individual treatment. I paint the machine guns with XF-1 Flat Black for the metal parts and Vallejo 995 German Gray for the handles and ammo boxes. I then apply a wash of Ivory Black, and follow that by highlighting with a Prismacolor Chrome Silver pencil. The tracks are base coated with Vallejo Panzer Aces 302 Dark Rust, then given an Ivory Black wash. I also apply lots of pigments, dry brush Citadel Colour 61-56 Chainmail on the metal parts and dry brush Warm Gray on the track shoes. I give the periscopes and headlights a reflective coating on the backside with Citadel Colour 61-55 Chrome Silver, give the periscopes a coat of Tamiya X-25 Clear Green and paint the CITV lens with X-26 Clear Orange. The tow cable heads are painted XF-53 Neutral Gray prior to weathering. I give the road wheel tires a base coat of Flat Black. The metallic wear on the drive

sprockets comes from dry brushing Citadel Chainmail.

This model cries out for some extreme weathering effects. For the panel fading, I use dots of Lukas 209 Beige and Lukas 0190 Warm Gray oil paints streaked out with turpenoid. Next up are the scratches and chips. The first color I use is Vallejo 989 Sky Gray, then some smaller patches of Vallejo 822 German Camo Black Brown. For the dirt streaks and rust effects, I use mainly W&N 076 Burnt Umber and 35 Raw Umber, but also smaller amounts of 074 Burnt Sienna, Abteilung 502 092 German Ochre and Lukas 0106 Sepia. The metallic effects are from Citadel Chainmail and a Chrome Silver Prismacolor pencil.

Pigments for the main body are four main colors: Mig F063 Volcanic Ash, P234 Rubble Dust, P030 Beach Sand, and Vallejo 73113 Light Slate Gray. I mix these up and apply them to the lower hull, running gear and tracks. I also apply smaller



18



19

amounts of the individual colors over the entire model, with smaller and smaller patches as I move up towards the turret roof. It's pretty easy to drown a model in pigments and hide all of your previous work, so I go light on this weathering technique. Finally, I use black pastel chalk to stain the exhaust area.

Conclusion

This was a really exciting project for me. The finished model itself is impressively large and looks vaguely like the bastard offspring of a dreadnought and a Merkava. It's also pretty liberating to build a model without poring over reference material. The model does come with a hefty price tag

for plastic, but the enjoyment you will get in building and finishing such a well-engineered and complete kit more than makes up for it. This model was made to be built, not sit in the closet. Almost anyone can turn out something they will be pleased with, regardless of experience level.

—Jeff Kleinhenz

MMiR RECCE

Bandai EFGF M61A5 Main Battle Tank "Semovente" Phantom Element. Kit Number 0157471. Suggested Retail Price ¥9000 (about \$97). Kit graciously supplied by HobbyLink Japan. Type "Phantom Element" or BAN957471 into the www.hlj.com search engine to find this item!



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Operation al-Fajr

SCULPTING A MARINE CORPS SCENE FROM OIF



My diorama "Operation al-Fajr" depicts a battle in Operation Iraqi Freedom. These U.S. Marines figures, designed for the diorama and vignette builder, can be used with 1:35 scale modern USMC vehicles.



1. The M16A2 gunner. His body/armature are roughed out and one leg is finished. I use Aves Apoxie for my sculpting, applying it in multiple layers. Allow the putty to dry completely between layers. You can speed this process by placing the figure in a slow cooker at a low setting or directly under a 100-watt bulb (note, however, that plastic weapons may melt if you use the light bulb option). When working with this medium, I only allow it to air dry if part of the figure will need to be separated later for casting. Heating the putty makes separation difficult because it tends to fuse the different components together. 2. The resin armature parts. These are wired together with 18 gauge (about 1mm diameter) copper wire. Copper wire is ideal for this purpose—it is strong yet flexible. Paper clips

are unnecessarily thick, hard to bend and difficult to cut. Brass is too brittle and will snap if bent several times. Copper wire can be bent as often as needed to achieve the right pose. It is widely available and inexpensive. 3. This marine's leg was sculpted in several steps. The kneepad and pocket are added after the leg hardens. Layering Aves Apoxie is easy—after each layer hardens, simply apply fresh putty to the appropriate areas. This material is initially soft and sticky, so you can continue to shape it after applying it to the model. When you are satisfied with its shape, let it set completely (this takes about 30 minutes with heat and up to two hours without). For finer details, use blades and other modeling tools. Note also the hand armature, hollowed out and ready for putty fingers.



4. The coattails are also sculpted in multiple layers. An alternative and very effective technique for creating coattails is to roll the putty into thin sheets before applying it to the figure. 5, 6. Note the sharp edge at the bottom of the jacket. To get this effect, I first apply the

putty and cut it to shape. Then, I dip a brass toothpick into talcum powder and use it to roll the bottom edge of his jacket, much as a baker would use a rolling pin to make a piecrust. I use one hand to hold the tool and the other to grip the figure. 7. The flak vest. Again,



sculpting in multiple layers results in a realistic appearance. Check the bulk after each layer for size and scale. At times, I have to grind or carve away putty if it appears too thick. By checking after each layer you minimize the amount of work you have to redo. 8. The

back and side taking shape. Much remains to be added. 9, 10. The sleeves, near completion. I sculpt each in two steps to give the cuffs a sharp appearance. 11. The fingers. These are sculpted one at a time. This can be tedious, but pauses to allow the putty to dry pro-



vide a break. 12. The face, also sculpted with several layers of freshly mixed putty. I start with the nose, and after it hardens I add the eyes. The cheeks and the mouth can be done in one step. Lastly, I add the lower eyelid. Again, check your work frequently from all an-

gles to avoid time-consuming corrections. 13. I change heads and use a slightly modified Warriors casting. 14. The figure after detailing with putty and lead foil. Putty is great for dimensional detail but can be difficult to work with. Lead foil is good for subtle effects.



15. A casting of the sculpture with gear added, painted primer gray. This will become the master. Making a casting allows me to use the same body with different arms, heads and gear configuration. 16. The camelback water supply, some other gear and weapons. 17.

18. The completed figure ready for paint. Before priming the entire figure, I remove the trigger hand and weapon to be primed separately. 18. I paint my figures with as much gear on as possible, provided that the gear does not interfere with my ability to reach any tight



areas with a paintbrush. An exception to this is rifle barrels, which need to be added later because they are so easily broken during routine handling. 19. The figure, painted and with a friend. I use Vallejo acrylics, which are great for 1:35 scale figures. 20. The same

body casting with new arms, head and gear. Pay close attention to the pose of the soldier firing his weapon from this vehicle. Note also the 18 gauge copper wire. 21. The figure with his right arm added. To sculpt the arm, I apply two sausage-shaped pieces to the





wire and allow that to dry before adding the sleeve. This two-step process provides a platform for the sleeve, which facilitates sculpting the folds in the cloth. 22. The addition of the left arm. This head is the unused one from the first figure. 23. The figure with hands and

some web gear added. Note the position of his head, indicating that he is peering down his weapons site. 24. The correct and natural way of holding and shooting a rifle. Accurate posture is often overlooked, but is very important to modelers. 25. The web gear and



gas mask bag. I try to depict a natural sag to the web gear. 26. Note the soldier's expression, which indicates that he is taking aim and ready to fire. Many figures have simple, generic expressions, but I always try to give mine detail and specificity. 27, 28. His gear is

on and ready to cast. 29, 30. An assembled casting. As usual, I remove the rifle and hands prior to painting both to have better access to the face and to avoid breaking the barrel. 31. It is easier to paint the figure with his gear in place. Gluing gear onto a painted figure



can be difficult and messy. 32. I prefer Vallejo acrylics because they dry to a matte finish. Other lines of paint tend to have a shinier finish, particularly the dark greens and blues. I am approximating the digital camo pattern. I've seen some great work by Calvin Tan on this

difficult camo scheme. 33. The green acrylic has dried to a realistic flat finish. It is a bit muted, but that is appropriate for a modern soldier. I paint flesh with warm colors, again with Vallejo acrylics. 34. The M249 gunner. This is another conversion to the basic body,



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with new arms and web gear added. 35. Note the sagging suspension. This is fairly easy. roll out some Aves, cut a small sheet for the bottom part of his web gear and allow this to harden. The suspenders are thin strips of Aves. 36. The left side of the shirt. I start by

roughing out a basic arm shape with two sausage like blobs of putty over copper wire. Shape is not crucial—focus on bulk, size and length. After the arm dries but before applying any more putty, I measure the arm length and make any necessary corrections with



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a knife or sand paper. I follow some basic guidelines for the length of a 1:35 scale arm: from the top of the shoulder to the elbow should measure about 10mm, and from the elbow to the first knuckle should be the same length. I make the folds of his jacket sleeve by rolling

two thin sheets of freshly mixed Aves and wrapping one around the upper arm and the other around the lower arm. I then feather the two sheets with my finger or a moistened paintbrush at their point of intersection. Next, I press a knife blade into the soft putty to rep-



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resent sharp deep folds and a brass toothpick for the longer, more graceful folds. I smooth everything out with a moistened paintbrush. Make sure to clean your brush thoroughly, because if any epoxy putty remains, it will dry out and ruin the brush. 37. The figures in

action in a modern U.S. AmTrac. I designed them to be used this way, although in my diorama they are firing over a wall. 38. I use photographs from Iraq for reference when making the soldiers' gear. Sculpting the gear is a multi-step process. I do the pack, and gently



press in the canteens and pouch while it's still soft. I harden everything in a slow cooker, then press it into the web gear, which is still slightly soft. 39. This soldier's web gear is made from thin strips of Aves. I cut the putty to shape, allow it to partially harden, and then

attach it to the vest with a dot of superglue. Be sure to put the superglue on the vest, not the gear. That way you can manipulate the strap into the proper position before the glue sets completely. I create the folds in this figure's jacket sleeve by pushing an X-Acto



curved mini-blade into the wet putty, then smoothing it out with a moist paintbrush. 40. This figure is based on the flak vest casting. I give him a more dramatic pose by modeling his legs farther apart. The legs don't need to show every muscle—just aim for correct

size, length and bulk. 41. Some more of the armature. Note the point of the knee and shape of the legs. Again, not too much detail is necessary because it will all be covered in subsequent steps. The figures are normally quite lean—many of these soldiers are still in their



teens. Additionally, the folds in the uniform can be deeper and more dramatic when putty is pressed into a thin figure. 42. Jacket and shirt coattails that hang down away from the body are best done using thin sheets of pre-cut putty. You may need a small drop of su-

perglue to attach these sheets to the body, because the talcum powder used on the rolling surface makes the putty much less sticky. On this figure, I do the pants first, and then the tunic coattails. 43. I press the grenade pouches into the putty while it's still wet. You can



see where I slimmed down the elbow—it was sticking out too far. 44. The beginnings of the pack. Note the kneepad straps pressing into his right pant leg. This is done while the putty is still quite soft. Occasionally I let putty set for an hour or so before adding folds. This

technique is useful for fine detail work. 45. A dramatic view of the figure. I typically sculpt the sleeves individually and allow one to dry before starting the other. This prevents marring the wet putty during handling. 46. The head and fingers are attached. Note the helmet



straps. I make fingers by rolling out small balls of putty and gluing these onto the palm. Remember to put the superglue on the palm, not the finger, so that you can position the fingers to your satisfaction. They can be further refined after they harden. Once the fingers

are fully set, I add his thumbs. I complete the hands by adding tiny amounts of freshly mixed putty to enhance the knuckles. 47. The last of the Fab Four. 48. It takes several steps to sculpt the camelback with convincing dimensionality. The goal is to avoid a flat ap-



pearance. 49. All of the straps and webbing are made of thin strips of putty. Plastic strip, or better yet thin strips of lead, are good alternatives. Remember to account for the effect of gravity when sculpting web gear. 50. A casting ready to paint. I prime my figures with

gray Tamiya spray surface primer. Make sure to shake this product vigorously before use and to store it at room temperature. 51. The four figures posing for their photo shoot. There is a lot of detail that still needs paint. 52. Ready to rock and roll!

A PEEK AT WHAT'S NEW ON THE FIGURE FRONT



Alpine

Alpine's output of new offerings has been copious lately, assuring them the lead-off spot in this column for months to come. As usual, the quality of their molding is top-notch with no pesky bubbles. The resin is soft and cleanup is a snap—a sharp X-Acto blade works like a charm.

These guys seem to love SS personalities, and they pull them off really well. **35075, Joachim Peiper in the Ardennes (1)** is a prime example. This miniature portrait of the infamous SS officer is based on actual photographs, right down to the angle of the cap and the burlap-wrapped Zeiss binoculars. As usual, Alpine includes two heads, one with the SS officer cap and the other with the overseas side cap. The leather U-boat jacket that was so popular with Leibstandarte and Hitlerjugend and late model padded, reversible trousers complete this little gem's outfit.

Lest Peiper get lonely, Alpine offers **35076, LAH NCO in the Ardennes (2)**. His second pattern SS smock is distinguished by the loops on the shoulders and upper arms. His collar rank tab shows him to be an Oberscharführer, or senior squad leader. The trousers are a 1942 pattern. You can be flexible when painting this little bad boy because the smock came in a variety of patterns while the trousers were seen in both reed green and Italian camouflage. You can also get these figures together as 35077, LAH in the Ardennes Set.

Limey armor has been making a comeback in a big way, and the figure makers are keeping up with this trend. Alpine has pitched in their two cents with a nice pair of brand new Western Desert Brits. **35078, British Armoured Crew #1 (3)** is the standing fella that's shading his eyes from the glare of our flash. He wears the British battle dress blouse over Khaki Drill shorts with the ubiquitous ammunition boots. The seated chap is **35079, British Armoured Crew #2 (4)**. He wears the standard issue V-neck woolen pullover and Khaki Drill shorts. He also comes with a pudgy little puppy. Awww! Head choice for both figures is between the famous black beret and the side cap. They are available together as 35080, British Armoured Crew Set.

The latest in Alpine's lineup of 1:16 scale figures is **16005, WSS Gebirgsjäger "Prinz Eugen." (5)** We're going to skip all the brown-nosing adjectives on this one because the picture pretty much says it all, but we did dig up some background info on this rather unusual subject. The Prinz Eugen division was formed in 1942 and spent most of the war in a vicious scrap with Tito's partisans in Yugoslavia. They also took part in other operations throughout the Balkans and participated in disarming the Italian Army after that country surrendered to the Allies.

The mountain troop uniform is complete right down to the Prinz Eugen Odal rune on the collar tab and the Czech-manufactured 7.92mm Gew 33/40 rifle that was special issue for Gebirgsjäger and Fallschirmjäger.

Battalion

We introduced you to these guys in the last edition of Mini-Men. They have two vignette offerings this time around, so sit up and pay attention!

First up is **35011, The Russian Special Troops (6)**. We love this modern Russian stuff. Just for the record, Spetznaz is a general term used for almost all Russian Special Forces types, and there are several different

branches. Usually Spetznaz troops wear black uniforms, but in Chechnya they have been spotted in the official woodland "Flora" pattern as well. The uniform seen on all three of the figures in this set is called a Krot suit and was originally designed for Soviet Airborne troops. The first of our merry little band is either really tired or having a bad day. Besides the Krot suit, he wears a Pioneer M23 assault vest that is used by many different branches of the Russian government. His weapon is an AKS-74 with a GP-25 grenade launcher. The bandana-wearing Russkie wears a piece of web gear called a gunners apron or chest rig, probably a Tarzan M22. The funny looking headgear on the third fellow is a MASKA steel bulletproof helmet, which is also available with a facemask. He wears yet another incarnation of the many Russian chest rigs. Both of these gents carry the AKS-74 with folding stock. This set also comes with a base, stock number 35011L.

The second vignette from **Battalion, 35016, Behind Enemy Lines (7)**, is set in WW2. This three-figure set includes a Russian scout, a female radio operator and a German prisoner. Both of the Russians wear a two-piece camouflage coverall that was issued to scouts, snipers and reconnaissance troops. This was the most commonly issued Russian camouflage uniform. There were some variations in pattern and color, which leaves you with some painting options. As for the German, we think the rag stuffed in his mouth is a particularly nice touch. This set also comes with a radio for the female and some log elements. You can also get this vignette with a base as 35016L.

One piece of advice we have for all the Russian resin figures we have seen lately is to make sure to thoroughly wash the parts before assembly. The mold-parting agent on these figures retards the adhesive action of superglue considerably.

Bravo 6

Bravo 6 has whipped out some more dead ringers for the characters in the movie Platoon.

Everyone around the office has gone ape over this lineup, with lots of chest thumping and fruit throwing going on every time new additions arrive. **35003, U.S. Infantry Sergeant Vietnam '68 (8)** looks just like the "good guy" sergeant from the movie. His uniform details are pretty much the same as those we looked at in MMIR 47, with the OD Green jungle uniform, M1956 web gear and ARVN rucksack. Whoever is sculpting these little bad boys definitely knows what he's doing!

35004, U.S. Infantry Machine Gunner Vietnam '68 (9) continues this trend with another familiar face, this time toting an M60 and covered in ammo belts. The belts are a little intimidating—they require patience and good source of heat for bending, like hot water or a hair dryer. Like the rest of the Vietnam '68 figures, both of these come with extra grenades and decals for the arm patches.

Bravo 6 has some Russians this time around, too. There's **35104, Soviet Soldier w/ Panzerfausts (10)**. There are other figures out there with a similar theme but we think the facial characteristics and the jaunty angle of the Ushanka fur cap really make this little guy a crowd pleaser. The provided Panzerfausts have some casting flaws, but this should be no problem given the 100 plastic extras you probably have in your scrap box, thanks to Dragon and other manufacturers.

35103, Gettin' Some Kicks...1943-45 (11) is a statement about the outcome of the Great Patriotic War if ever we saw one, not to mention a great diorama starter. This





is a two-figure set of a Russian infantryman in a quilted uniform literally giving his German prisoner the boot. The surrendering German wears the M43 uniform with plain pockets on the tunic and the short boots with "retreat gaiters" that sets this pair in the 1943-45 time period.

Dragon

Guadalcanal was a pivotal campaign in the Pacific War and we are glad someone is finally giving it some attention. **6379, U.S. Marines Guadalcanal 1942 (12)** is a new four-figure set from the Big D in their '39-45 series. All four dudes in this set are perfectly posed to portray a patrol creeping around in the steamy jungle. Their main attire is the rather scruffy looking M1941 dungarees that can be seen in many photos from throughout the Pacific War. The items that really root these figures in time are the weapons they carry.

First up is the BAR Gunner, and he seems like you could fit him in anywhere during the Pacific War. Things start to get interesting with the second fellow, who is checking out whatever looms overhead. He carries the famous M1903 Springfield rifle, a leftover from WW1. This bolt-action rifle was still standard for Marine riflemen during the Guadalcanal Campaign.

The third man carries an M50 Reising, which was originally designed to fill the same purpose as the Army's M1 carbine: a lightweight rifle for weapons crews and communications personnel. The M50 proved to be unpopular both because its unusual bolt design made it prone to jamming and because the weak magazine locking mechanism meant that the clip could drop out if it was bumped the wrong way. Not good. Use of this weapon was largely abandoned after Guadalcanal. The last of our quartet also carries the M1903 rifle, but with the rather mean looking 16-inch long M1905 bayonet.

Detail throughout is everything you expect from current Dragon figure sets, with excellent weapons and uniform details. The rather static poses can be charged up a little by using a razor saw to cut behind the knee and raise one foot off the ground. Exercise care with the ammo pouches and bandoleers—these could interfere with fitting the arms. It's a good idea to glue this equipment on first and then work around it, trimming or filling as necessary until everything looks right.

Gaso.line

Gaso.line continues to fill the gap for 1:48 scale fans that want to add some life to their projects. The sets we have seen from this French company beat the pants off the blobby stuff available in plastic for this scale. These figures all come with separate heads and arms, making conversions a snap.

50383, Marder III crew "in action" Russia (13) depicts a pair of crewmen made for Tamiya's new Marder kit. On the box art, these two are painted up as SS types. With a little modification and creative painting, the reversible trousers and cap on the commander figure and the smock on the ammo-handling crewman could just as easily be Wehrmacht winter duds. The ammo-loading crewman comes with a brass shell with a separate resin warhead, a very nice touch.

50384, German crew "in supply" DAK (14) is a three figure set of Afrika Korps crewmen reloading their Panzer in preparation for their next battle. Each man has a different set of headgear. The figure with the coffee cup wears the overseas cap, the one handing up the shell wears the

unpopular tropical helmet and the squatting kraut has the tropical Bergmütze. The shorts and footwear suggest that these guys are from early in the desert war, but you can be flexible—shorts were still worn behind the lines even after the Germans ruled them a no-no for front line operations. This set also comes with a brass shell casing and a separate resin warhead for the round.

Master Club

Russia's Master Club brings us a breath of fresh air with some subjects from that oft-forgotten conflict, the First World War. There is quite a variety in their WW1 lineup and the animation varies from relatively static display figures to highly animated guys perfect for a diorama. Cleanup and assembly are pretty easy and there are no large bubbles or casting flaws.

35102BR, The German WWI Soldier (15), is the standing kraut getting ready to chuck a potato masher. The famous coal-scuttle helmet was introduced in 1916, which places this guy in the late war period. The uniform and equipment are well rendered, right down to the grenade satchels and the look of the puttees.

35104AR, The German WWI Soldier (16), is the kneeling German pulling the fuse on the Stielhandgranate's handle. This fella wears the earlier field gray uniform with red piping. The cloth-covered pickelhaube helmet originally had a spike, but this was discarded after 1915. The regiment number was usually displayed on the front of the helmet's cloth cover.

35106R, The Austro-Hungarian Soldier WWI (17) has a more sedate pose and would work well as a display figure. He is dressed in the 1909 issue pike-gray uniform and is wearing the distinctive Austro-Hungarian Kepi. His webbing and equipment look a lot like the German stuff from WW1 and WW2. The rucksack with its two large back pockets definitely influenced the WW2 Gerbirgsjäger rucksack. His rifle is a Steyr Mannlicher, which was standard issue from 1905 and considered a very dependable weapon.

The coolest things about these figures, of course, are the mustaches. But perhaps that goes without saying.

Mig Productions

We see a lot of Miggie figgies that follow two main themes: the Russian Front and the Middle East. This time around is no exception, with two Israelis and two Russkies. These figures are all very well made and simple to assemble. As we mentioned before, you'll want to clean them off before construction to get rid of the mold-parting agent.

The first pair featured here is definitely made for that Dragon Isherman you just finished. **35-295, IDF Tank Commander Early (18)** is radioing back to headquarters to bring up more ammo and Manischewitz. **35-296, IDF Tank Gunner Early (19)** is on the lookout for the delivery truck. Both of these Israeli crewmen wear Czech-designed tanker's helmets that are seen in Israeli tanker photos from the 50's and 60's. Uniform regulations during this period appear to be pretty lax for Israeli armor crews and this is reflected in these figures as well. These two can be purchased together as 35-297, Early IDF Tank Crew.

Fueling by hand must be a big pain. Imagine feeding the thirst of a T-34, five gallons at a time. Why not just pull into the Shell station? Anyway, these two Russians are doing things the hard way. **35-310, Russian Tanker with Fuel Can (WWII) (20)** is the crewman lugging a can in the



THERE SHOULD BE
STEERING WHEEL
HERE SOMEWHERE.



M1943 uniform. His buddy, **35-311, Russian Tanker Refueling (WWII) (21)** wears the very stylish one-piece coveralls as he begins to pour. These two are available as a set as well: 35-312, Refueling Russian tankers. The sculpting and production quality are up to Mig's excellent standards.

MiniArt

No edition of Mini-Men is complete without taking a look at a sampling of the latest from MiniArt. On deck this time around is **35069, British Armored Car Crew (22)**.

This great little five-pack of figures includes Brits in a variety of poses and uniforms appropriate for either Europe or North Africa. The first is an officer type that could be used for either setting. The second two figures wear pixie suits and are most appropriate for Europe. We like the hunched over pose of the driver—he looks so intent!

The last two figures are wearing Khaki Drill blouses and trousers and are best for crewing British armor in a sunny Mediterranean climate. As we've mentioned before, these figures come with separate arms, legs and heads and are great for conversions. Some of you may want to swap out the heads for resin ones. There are some gaps to fill with these figures, especially around the neck and where the legs join in the back. Don't let that deter you, as these figures are a great value in comparison to resin or white metal.

Royal

Well, we got our grubbies on some of those accessories that Royal Models has pumped out for the Italeri PT boat and we are more than willing to share the love. One of the figure sets they recently released is **536, U.S. Sailor and Navy Officer (WWII) (23)**. The set includes one U.S. sailor dressed in enlisted rank utilities that consist of a light blue shirt and denim blue jeans. Headgear is the famous Dixie Cup white fatigue cap. The inspecting officer wears the khaki drill uniform for officers and chief petty officers, which actually originates directly from the army uniform.

Royal steps back into familiar territory with **567, Italian Captain and Tanker WWII (24)**. The goatee sportin' fella in the woolen Bustina side cap is designed to be holding a map as he points. His getup includes the black leather tanker jacket, officer's gray-green flared trousers and black leather leggings sometimes worn by tankers, artillery and mounted troops. The tanker is decked out for spaghetti night in the M1941 blue linen coveralls that featured lots of pockets as well as elbow and kneepads. The standard issue black leather crash helmet in his hand is an impressive accessory. He also sports a two-pocket ammo bandoleer that was issued to mounted troops. Both men come with a Beretta M34 pistol holster. As usual for Royal, all four of these figures have nice, sharp detail definition and plenty of character in their faces.

Tank

The latest from Tank from Russia is action packed, baby! As we have come to expect from this company, there is lots of animation in their newest offerings, perfect for all of you looking to add a little excitement to your lives.

35098, German StuG Crew Summer 1943-45 (25) is designed to fill the hatches of any StuG, with the commander pointing out targets to an anxious loader manning

an MG34. The arms on the machine gunner are a little tricky and you may want to mock up the MG shield to make sure everything falls together just right.

Tank loves to depict tank crews bailing out. We have seen them cover this idea with German crewmen and now they have turned their attention to the Russians. Each set seen here contains two figures. **35101, Escaping Soviet Tank Crew Winter 1944-45 (26)** consists of a tanker in coveralls firing a pistol over his shoulder and a limping crewman wearing a quilted gymnostiorka. The second set, **35102, Escaping Soviet Tank Crew II Winter 1942-45 (27)**, is composed of two Russian dudes in coveralls, one leaping and the other banging away with a PPSH. These guys both come with a terrific rendition of the Soviet crash helmet that is molded separately, so you can depict it falling off. As a matter of fact, both sets do a terrific job of rendering tears and holes in the uniforms for that lived-in look. There are a few bubbles that require filler, but the highly animated poses and attention to detail far outshine any minor flaws.

Trumpeter

Trumpeter has jumped into the big figure game with **00701, WWII Soviet Tank Crewman in 1942 (28)**. We love the grin on this guy—that smile is straight out of a toothpaste commercial. But seriously, this styrene tanker reminds us of those cool Dragon 1:16 scale figures from the 1990's that had the torso in halves and separate head, arms and legs. This makes for easy and inexpensive conversion material. There are some goodies included too, including a display base, choice of pistols, a PPSH submachine gun and photo-etch details. This figure is perfect to plop in front of one of those huge T-34s offered by Trumpeter. Don't worry if the date on the box isn't 1942—the Russian tanker coveralls came in many different variations, so there is really no one correct year for the uniform.

Ultracast

It must have been casual Friday over at Ultracast when they conceived these three latest figgies. Each of them depicts a British/Commonwealth tank crewman in various states of casual dress. These figures are all simple and flexible. Casting quality is excellent with no bubbles and very easy cleanup.

35049, Canadian/British Tank Crewman (29) stands with hands on hips as if to say, "Sorry mate, no work being done here today." He wears the black tanker's beret with the RTR (Royal Tank Regiment) badge and the British khaki serge Battle Dress minus the jacket (it's on loan to the Alpine guy who leads off this column). **35050, Canadian/British Tank Crewman (30)** is lighting up a smoke. He is dressed in much the same way as 35049, but with his suspenders up. **35051, Canadian/British Tank Crewman All Theaters Summer 1939-45 (31)** is the squatting gent. He is set apart by his Other Ranks issue wool angora collarless shirt. All three are sculpted by none other than world-famous figure maker Alan Ball and are guaranteed to please.

All figures were graciously submitted for review by the manufacturers.

FEETS DON'T FAIL ME NOW!



ANY IDEA WHAT I'M DOING WITH MY LEFT HAND?



I QUITE ENJOY SMOKING CIGARETTES.



Welcome, Mr. Churchill



The long-awaited AFV Club Churchill Mk III arrives

In 1940, the British Expeditionary Force lost almost all of its equipment in the evacuation from Dunkirk and was in dire need of replacements. This was especially true for tanks, of which only about 100 remained in Great Britain. In response, the British government accelerated production of the A20, a tank design that predated the onset of the Second World War.

The A20, which was heavily influenced by the French Char B, was designed primarily for trench warfare. The tank's main objectives, therefore, were to navigate shell-cratered ground and to demolish infantry obstacles such as barbed wire. In 1939, a specification was issued for an improved version of the A20. The Royal Arsenal, Woolwich and Harland and Wolff succeeded in developing a working prototype by June 1940. At that point, Vauxhall Motors took over the project, designing and building their own prototype, designated the A22, by November 1940. This version's design took into account the blitzkrieg tactics observed in the battles in Poland and France. However, it retained many of the features of the A20. Paradoxically, this proved to be both an advantage and a disadvantage for the vehicle. The first production units were available by the middle of 1941.

The Churchill's hull consisted of simple flat plates that were initially bolted but later welded

together. The suspension fit under the two large panniers on either side of the hull, with the track running over the tops. There were 11 bogies on each side, each of which carried two 10-inch wheels. Under normal circumstances, only nine of the bogies bore the vehicle's weight. The front ones came into play only when the vehicle nosed into the ground or against an obstacle, while the rear ones acted as track tensioners. The twin engines were connected through a common crankshaft that fed a regenerative transmission, which was steered by a tiller bar rather than levers or a steering wheel. The tank's interior was fairly roomy, and the large hatches in its sides facilitated escape. These were primary reasons for the vehicle's later conversion into the AVRE. The turrets on the early production runs were cast with a rounded shape and were sufficient for the relatively small 2 pdr gun, but when the larger 6 pdr gun was introduced, it required larger turrets with welded construction. To fulfill its role as an infantry support vehicle, the first models of the Churchill were equipped with a 3-inch howitzer in the hull. Although this delivered a useful HE round that partially made up for the weakness of the 2 pdr in that area, it was limited by a poor firing arc because of the way the tracks extended in front of the hull.

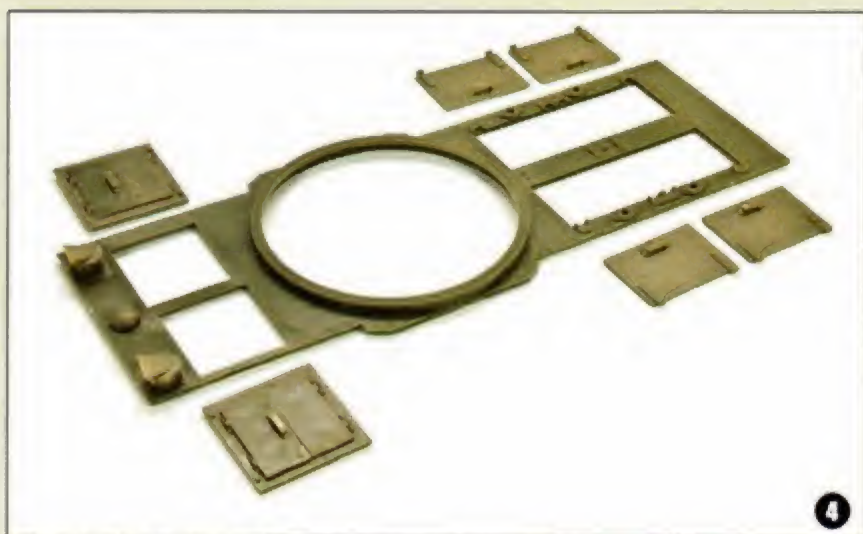
The Churchill's production was rushed in anticipation of invasion, and the tank therefore entered

service while still suffering from mechanical problems and defects. It performed poorly in its first combat outing, the disastrous 1942 raid on Dieppe. After numerous modifications, the tank's performance began to improve, particularly in the North African Campaign, where its exceptionally heavy armor, low silhouette and good climbing abilities made it reasonably successful. Complaints continued, however, mainly concerning its very low speed and poor armament. These two weaknesses haunted the Churchill throughout its entire career. Nevertheless, after more modifications the Churchill tank served in both the Italian Campaign and on the Western Front.

Let's get rolling

Before beginning the kit construction in earnest, I opt to add the AFV Club turned brass replacement bolt heads. These provide crisper detail than the plastic ones included in the kit. To install them, you need to drill holes into the side panniers. Keep in mind that the bolt pattern is slightly different on either side of the tank. I don't realize this until I have already completed drilling out one more hole than necessary. I fix my mistake by gluing a small piece of plastic rod into the extra hole and sanding it smooth.

There's no avoiding it—if you're going to build a Churchill, then you're going to have to deal with a



1. I opt to add the AFV Club turned brass replacement bolt heads. These provide crisper detail than the plastic ones included in the kit. To install them, holes must be drilled in the sponsons. **2.** AFV Club has done a great job replicating the complex suspension system. The suspension itself comprises about 50 parts per side and is designed to articulate upon these real metal springs. **3.** As you can see, the suspension is pretty complex. I find it best to install all the components while the sponsons are upside down, letting gravity give a helping hand. **4.** The hull deck includes separate driver's hatches and engine access hatches. This kit is crying out for the Resicast Churchill engine set. **5.** The driver's front plate is superbly detailed and includes photo-etch parts to enhance both the BESA machine gun mount and the driver's visor. **6.** The assembled gun breech attaches to the back of the gun mantlet, but the locating pin does need a little trimming on the front of the breech to allow the metal barrel to fit. **7.** This is as far as you can go with assembly until the tracks are assembled. You have to admit this is a cool looking vehicle.

complex suspension and lots of road wheels. AFV Club has done some very nifty engineering with regard to the suspension assembly. The suspension itself is made up of about 50 parts per side and is designed to articulate upon real metal springs. Though not a difficult process, assembling the suspension does take some time. Many of the parts are not glued and it is a little tricky to keep everything in place. When it's time to put it all together (step two of the instructions), I find it easiest to turn the panniers upside down until I can pinch the suspension posts between the two pannier halves. Once the two sides are glued together, the spring posts are securely held in place.

Finishing this area involves placing the 11 suspension mounts and 11 mud scrapers. Although many of the parts look similar on the sprue, there are some important differences, so don't get complacent during this stage of construction. Study the instructions carefully to ensure that the parts are installed in their proper locations. Finally, attach the road wheels to the suspension posts, and if everything has gone according to plan, the suspension will be workable—a nice touch.

The remainder of the suspension construction involves assembling the drive wheels. Each wheel is

in two halves, with crisp detail that requires very little cleanup other than the sprue attachment burs on a couple of the teeth. A vinyl poly cap is trapped between the two drive sprocket halves and fits easily to the drive axle. The final drive housing is a separate part attached to the hull side plate; the idlers have two mounting panels attached to the front of the panniers.

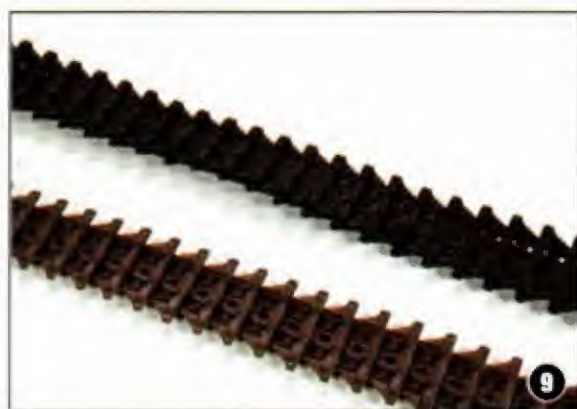
Topside

The main upper deck panel includes the forward crew hatch cut-outs, the turret ring and rear engine door cut-outs, front periscopes and a ventilator dome. To the front of the hull, the crew hatches are correctly offset. If you want to display the hatches open, the parts have inner padding as well as very small photo-etch inner fittings, a plastic latch handle and a separate

outer grab handle for good definition. The driver's plate has a separate main vision port hatch. The smaller bolted vision flap is also separate, so you can show either the full hatch or just the port open, as was often the case. There are also smaller plastic and photo-etch parts that can be added to the inside of the hatch and the visor.

On the left, the coaxial BESA MG is a single part with some photo-etch for the jacket. The photo-etch jacket and gun are a very tight fit into the mount (parts A32, A34, A35), and some careful shaving is necessary to get the gun into position. Beyond that, work on the upper hull is straightforward and moves quickly. The only





8 and 9. I use the optional individual-link injection styrene tracks in place of the single-piece vinyl tracks supplied in the kit. **10.** With the tracks in place, it's time to fit the track guards. These are molded separately, giving you the option of fitting as many or as few as you like. **11.** I opt to leave off the large curved front sections and one of the center sections. Why? Because I can! **12.** In this shot you can see where I drilled one too many holes in the sponson side for the replacement brass bolt heads. I plug this with some plastic rod.



13. The first step in the painting process is a thorough primer coat with Gunze Sangyo Mr. Surfacer. This product is great for giving a smooth, hard, durable base for painting and finishing. **14.** My base color is a mix of Tamiya Cockpit Green and Dark Green/JGSDF. At this point I am not too concerned with a uniform coverage; in fact, I am actually trying to encourage variations in the finish. **15.** With the base camouflage color in place, I now add some color modulation using J.A. Green and Yellow Green. I use a small piece of card as a mask.

This product is great for giving a smooth, hard, durable base for painting and finishing.

I have in mind a vehicle serving in Tunisia, 1943. Sun fade, wear and dirt will all be part of the fun. Single color vehicles are an excellent opportunity to create exciting finishes. Monochromatic paint schemes—in this case green—don't need to be boring. My base color is a mix of Tamiya XF-71 Cockpit Green and XF-73 Dark Green/JGSDF that I spray in a light pattern over the vehicle. At this point I am not too concerned with total, uniform coverage; in fact, I am actually trying to encourage variations in the finish. Although this base color may initially seem too bright, I want a color that is strong enough to stand up to the weathering that will come later.

As I proceed, I continue to look for opportunities to enhance shadows and highlights, which will lay an interesting foundation for the steps to follow. To this end, I add XF-13 J.A. Green to the base color and continue to lay a foundation. On certain features, I use a small piece of cardboard as a mask. Finally, following some of the principals of the color modulation technique, I add XF-4 Yellow Green for the brightest highlights.

Mess it up

Now it's time to get down and dirty: weathering. The first few weathering steps are important in determining the appearance of the finished project, so I am careful to keep the wear controlled and logical—remember, you can always add more chips and scuffs later. To begin, using a fine brush and Vallejo acrylics (primarily 822 German Camo Black Brown), I add small scratches and marks to the surface of the vehicle. The brush is a great tool for replicating scrapes and scratches in a very controlled manner. For variety, I then switch to using small pieces of scrubbing pad, which produce finer,

change I make is to replace the molded brackets on the pioneer tools with small bits of photo-etch fret and wing nuts from the spares box.

The assembled gun breech fits to the back of the gun mantlet, but the locating pin does need a little trimming on the front of the breech to allow the metal barrel to fit. The gun assembly is held in place behind the front plate with two brackets that allow the gun to elevate.

The fit of the front and rear plates to the main turret shell needs no trimming or filling. The same is true for the lower turret ring, making for quick and easy assembly of the main turret parts. At the back is a three-part turret box that also assembles well and attaches to the four raised points on the rear turret wall. Smaller details rounding out the turret include a spotlight, antennae posts, extinguishers and roof periscopes. As with the crew hatches, interior hatch details are provided for the commander's hatch, so you can choose to display it either open or closed. The kit includes a very delicate photo-etch sighting frame; I suggest adding this item near the end of construction to avoid damage.

Gaining traction

For this project, I use AFV Club's workable replacement track links. The kit comes with vinyl tracks, and although nice, the individual links offer a greater level of detail. There are, however, two pin

marks per link that need to be filled. Not a huge deal, but it is time-consuming.

I must admit that the assembly of these links baffled me on my first attempt. I just could not get the knack of putting them together. They are designed so that one link hooks onto the next link and is then locked into place by a top plate. On my early attempts I failed to place the top plate properly, which caused the entire section to be misaligned, non-workable and generally a mess. Frustrated with the entire process, I set the tracks aside overnight only to find that the next day they almost build themselves. Round two is quick and easy work, taking only about half an hour per run. Hum, is there a lesson in there someplace? The results are a nice, durable working track run that I believe really enhances the kit's overall appearance.

Adding the large track guards is the final order of business. These are presented in six panels, allowing you to display your Churchill in any number of panel combinations ranging from fully covered tracks to bare-naked tracks. I choose partial nudity, leaving off the rounded front fenders and a section from the mid-left side. No particular reason, I just like the look.

Painting

The first step in the painting process is a thorough primer coat with Gunze Sangyo Mr. Surfacer.



16. I airbrush some initial layers of dust using heavily diluted Tamiya Deck Tan and Wooden Deck Tan. Again, I use a card mask to control the spray. **17.** I apply the chips and scratches using Vallejo acrylics (primarily German Camo Black Brown). For the initial scratches, I use a fine brush. **18.** To add further paint wear and scratches, I use small pieces of scrubbing pad. This produces finer scratches in a more random pattern. **19.** The next stage involves adding filters using acrylics instead of the more common

enamel and oil based paints. Filters are highly diluted colors applied to vary the tone of the base color. **20.** I use a white Prismacolor pencil to name the Churchill MARGIE, after my wife. These pencils are great for replicating chalk writing on vehicles. **21.** I prepare the entire vehicle for decal application and weathering by giving it a spray of Future Floor Wax. The decals on the turret are included in the kit and are applied using a touch of Microscale Micro Sol.

more random chips. Restraint and a light touch are the keys to these steps.

Lately, I've been having a lot of fun experimenting with acrylic filters. Filters are highly diluted colors applied to certain areas of the vehicle. They are perfect for subtly altering and defining the vehicles' features, fading paint work, and laying the foundations for further weathering. During this stage I also decide

to add a very personal touch to my Churchill by naming it MARGIE, after my wife. I create both the name and the vehicle numbers with a white Prismacolor pencil. Before adding the decals, I prepare the entire vehicle for weathering by giving it a spray of Future Floor Wax. The decals on the turret are included in the kit and are applied using a touch of Microscale Micro Sol, after which the vehicle is given another

light mist of Future.

After the acrylics, I switch to artist oils. Our Spanish friends call this "adding chromatic richness" others call it dot fading. To me, it is a little of each. Using colors like yellow ochre and green, I subtly alter the base color to enhance its visual appeal. Using lighter colors like white or cream further enhances this effect. To apply the oils, I



22



23



24



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26



27

22. The tracks are given an initial coat of Vallejo German Camo Black Brown followed by a wash using Mig's 502 Abteilung Wash Brown. This starts the weathering effect. **23.** I use oil paints to further vary the tones of the base color. To apply the oils, I pre-moisten the area with mineral spirits and then apply small dots of paint. On the horizontal surfaces I blend the colors using a scrubbing motion, while on the vertical surfaces I use downward strokes. **24.** I work Mig 502 Abteilung Shadow Brown into the corners and along panel lines to further enhance visual interest of the model's

surfaces. **25.** The final component to the weathering process is the application of Mig pigments. I choose to apply my pigments wet, dissolving them first in mineral spirits. **26.** Once the pigments are applied, I use a dry brush to remove or soften some of the edges. **27.** Once satisfied, I permanently adhere the pigments to the model's surface using Mig Productions Pigment Fixer. I touch a loaded brush to the edges of the area, and then just allow the Fixer to wash over the surface.

pre-moisten the area with mineral spirits and then apply small dots of paint. On the horizontal surfaces I blend the colors using a scrubbing motion, while on the vertical surfaces I use downward strokes. This process can be repeated as often as necessary, but it is important to allow each layer to dry completely before proceeding with the next. I use earth tones

from Mig's 502 Abteilung line to lay a color foundation for the application of pigments. As in all of these steps, I use numerous thin applications to yield the best results. I am also mindful to continually vary the color mix in order to increase visual interest.

The final component to the weathering process is the application of Mig pigments. I choose to apply

my pigments "wet," dissolving them in mineral spirits to a consistency somewhere between muddy water and low fat milk. I find this method to be highly effective because it allows me to easily control both the location and the density of the pigments. As always, I continually adjust the color mix. Once the pigments are applied, I use a dry brush to either



28. AFV Club does a great job of capturing the slab-sided look of the Mk III turret. **29.** Note the way that the various pigment washes create natural-looking weathering effects, such as the dust, oil and crud stains. **30.** In this black and white reproduction, all of the



various tones and effects have become indistinct. This image is included to demonstrate just how difficult it can be to interpret black and white wartime reference photos. Next time you look at one, keep in mind that there may be way more tones on the real thing.


lightly remove or adjust the pigments to soften some of the edges. Once I'm satisfied, I permanently adhere them to the model's surface using Mig Productions Pigment Fixer. I touch a loaded brush to the edges of the area, and then just allow the Fixer to wash over its surface. One advantage to setting the pigments is that you are able to continue working on the area once it dries without disrupting your previous work.

What does the camera see?

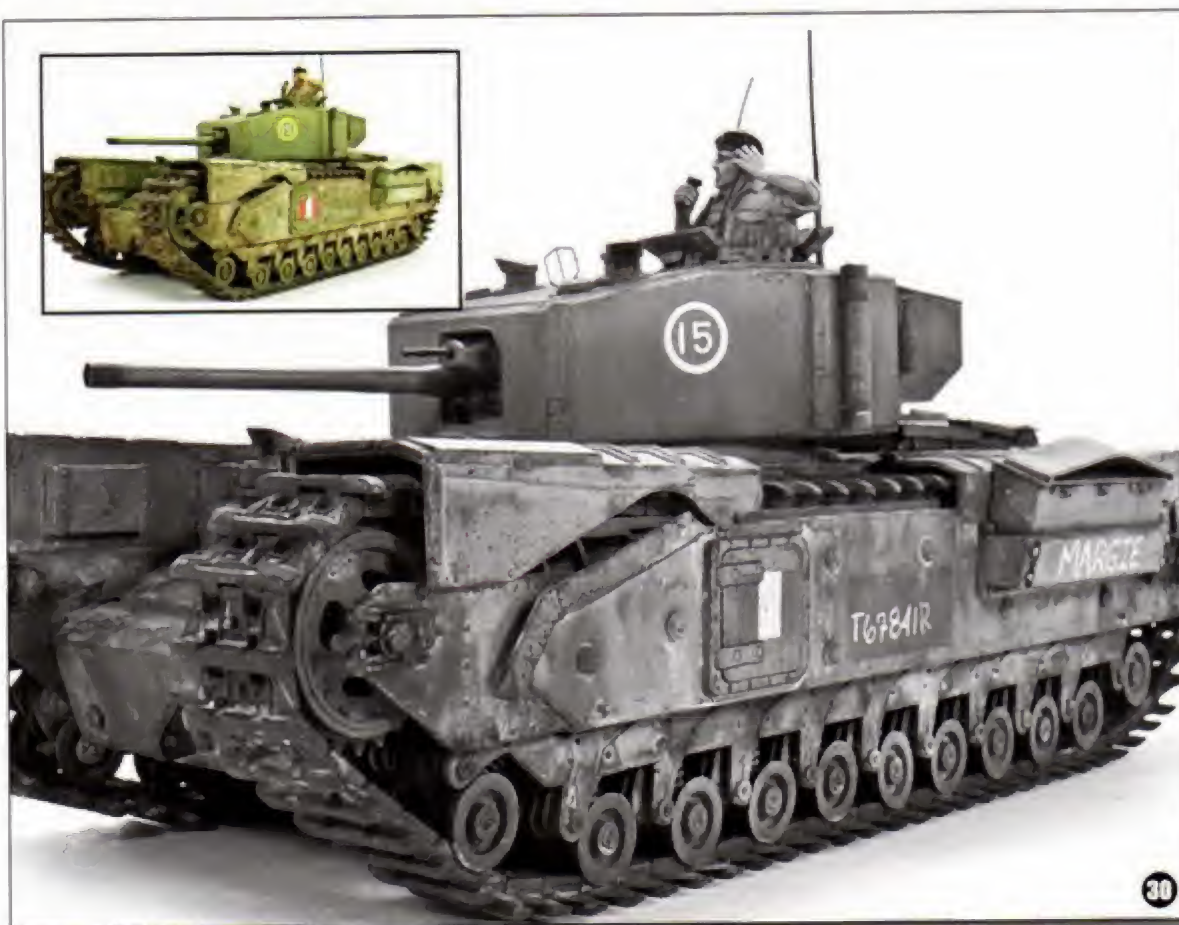
Finally, it's time to step back and take an objective look at the model. One of the benefits of producing work for print is that I continually take in-progress photos. I have found the camera to be a very handy tool to help me see what I've produced. The camera shows me in an unbiased manner which areas may need further refinement or attention in a way that my naked eye simple can't. In this case, I notice that the vehicle's hull and turret don't appear unified. Further work includes the application of a light wash of pigments to the turret and a few extra pin washes to the lower hull to accentuate some details.

Although I have not presented this vehicle on a scenic base, a figure adds a sense of scale to this monster. I find the perfect commander figure from the Ultracast range. The figure is well cast in light resin with very little cleanup required. I paint him using Vallejo Model Color acrylics, and then as a final touch I add the microphone and headphone cables, which I make from thread coated with superglue.

Parting thoughts

This kit was a blast to build, pure and simple. Yes, the suspension is fiddly, but not so much so that it casts a cloud over the whole project, and the result is a superb rendition of the complicated Churchill suspension. Adding the AFV Club replacement tracks certainly enhances the final appearance and is well worth the effort. I also very much appreciate the fact that AFV Club replicated the large track guards as separate pieces, which allows you almost unlimited options to add individuality to your vehicle. MARGIE has definitely found a place in my heart—and on my shelf. 

—Rick Lawler



MMiR RECCE

AFV Club Churchill Mk III British Infantry Tank. Kit number AF35153. Suggested retail price \$49.00. Kit graciously provided by the U.S. importer, Merit International.

AFV Club Track Link for Churchill (workable). Set number AF35156. Suggested retail price \$15.00. Kit graciously provided by the U.S. importer, Merit International.

AFV Club Rivet for British Tank, versions A and B. Set numbers AG35020 and AG35021. Suggested retail price \$11.50 each. Kits graciously provided by the U.S. importer, Merit International.

Ultracast British/Empire Tank Crew Italy/NW Europe 1944. Set number 35043. Suggested retail price \$24.00.

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